BOOK REVIEWS

HR: A Biography of H.R. MacMillan, by Ken Drushka. Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing, 1995. 400 pp. Illus. $39.95 cloth.

In the early months of 1960 Harvey Reginald MacMillan, founder of British Columbia's largest forest products company, set off from Lima, Peru, on his private yacht, the *Marijean*, for the Galapagos Islands. Aboard was Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris, the controversial Royal Air Force commander famed for the bombing raids he launched on German cities during the Second World War. On the first morning out to sea, "Harris arose and, for some reason, presumed to order the captain to make a change of course. When MacMillan . . . learned of this, he ordered the captain to take the ship back to Lima. Harris was put ashore, and they departed (again) for the Galapagos without him." In the words of author Ken Drushka, "No one but MacMillan gave orders on his ship" (p. 342).

Of the many stories that Drushka tells in *HR*, a biography of British Columbia's most successful lumberman, none captures more succinctly the force of MacMillan's personality, or the power that MacMillan commanded over all who worked with or around him. MacMillan presided over the expansion of British Columbia's forest industry through the first half of the twentieth century. He was the quintessential entrepreneur, a man who in 1919, at the age of thirty-four, saw the possibility of making substantial profits by coordinating the sale of BC lumber in world markets, a function to that time controlled by American agents. The H.R. MacMillan Export Company succeeded brilliantly, so much so that eventually it provoked a rival group of mills to establish its own marketing company, known as Seaboard Lumber Sales. Their bitter competition provides the dramatic tension around which Drushka tells the story of MacMillan's rise to business prominence. Whether by skill, stealth, or good luck, MacMillan always seemed to outmanoeuvre his opponents. By 1958, when he retired as chief executive of the firm, MacMillan had successfully incorporated into the company the coastal region's largest logging enterprise, Bloedel, Stewart, and Welch, and had laid the foundation for a merger with the province's largest producer of pulp and

paper, the Powell River Company. Out of these acquisitions emerged a large, bureaucratic, and professionally managed corporation far different from the H.R. MacMillan Export Company of the interwar period.

HR traces the public life of MacMillan in a detailed manner for the first time. Discussion of MacMillan's early history as a professional forester, his work during the two world wars as a servant of the federal state, his endlessly clever responses to competitors, his views on the new forest management practices implemented by the Coalition and Social Credit governments of the 1940s and 1950s, and his disillusionment with J.V. Clyne, his successor at MacMillan Bloedel, adds significantly to our understanding of this important industrialist. The intensely personal nature of the forest industry in British Columbia to the 1940s is strongly suggested through the author's careful documentation of MacMillan's many friends and contacts both inside and outside of the business community. MacMillan seemed to know everybody. However, apart from some very insightful suggestions about MacMillan's relationship of more than thirty years with his private secretary Dorothy Dee, who devoted her life to serving him, Drushka's approach does not tell us much about his domestic life, or about his family.

The other strand that runs through *HR* — the part that is less about MacMillan and more about the industry — finds its fullest expression in Drushka's discussion of government forest policy. MacMillan disliked the forest management practices implemented in the 1940s and 1950s because they left too much control in the hands of the government and bureaucracy. He attacked the concentration of ownership among fewer and fewer large corporations, a tendency that the new forest management licensing system would reinforce. Regeneration of the forests would suffer because responsibility for reforestation was divided between the public and the private sectors, and because the British Columbia government — owner of most of the province's forest land — would divert forest income into the province's general revenue rather than reinvest it in the resource. In his submission to the second Sloan Commission in 1955, MacMillan argued for small, independent operators working alongside large corporations. This position, says Drushka, made MacMillan an overnight "hero and champion" to the thousands of people in coastal communities whose livelihoods depended upon the viability of small operators. In several previous publications Drushka has also criticized the big business/big government/big labour approach to forest management that emerged in British Columbia after the Second World War, and Drushka's empathy with MacMillan on these matters may explain, at least in part, his very favourable portrayal of MacMillan. The apparent contradiction of a corporate executive criticizing monopolistic forest companies is not, however, well explained.

While not an official biography, *HR* is written primarily from sources generated by, or sympathetic to, MacMillan and his company. "Much of the information" in the book, including audiotapes of interviews with several of MacMillan's friends and colleagues, "came from material collected and a

manuscript written [from 1980 to 1991] by MacMillan's grandson, the late Harvey Southam" (p. 14). Two collections of H.R. MacMillan's papers, one personal, the other corporate, constitute the other major source. From these materials Drushka has drawn many insightful quotations that allow us to hear MacMillan's voice on a wide range of issues. However, the author is much less comfortable with "secondary" literature relating to the historical context within which MacMillan operated. A case in point is Drushka's handling of MacMillan's enthusiatic support for the recommendations of the Kidd Commission, which in July 1932 suggested draconian cutbacks to government expenditures and a weakening of democratic institutions as the provincial government's response to the Great Depression. Historical literature on the relationship between business and government across North America in the 1920s and 1930s is extensive, and includes a fine master's thesis by Robert Groves on the "business government" of Simon Fraser Tolmie in British Columbia from 1928 to 1933. Reference to it might have broadened our understanding of whether MacMillan's antipathy to government was unique to the man, or a product of his class.

HR: A Biography of H.R. MacMillan presents a well-written and engaging portrait of a very influential British Columbian. Drushka succeeds admirably in telling the story of a forest industry leader and, through MacMillan's biography, of the industry itself in its formative years. The book is highly accessible to the general reader yet suggests many possibilities for additional research in the fields of British Columbian business and forest history. The latter may be its enduring legacy.

University of British Columbia ROBERT A.J. MCDONALD

Logging the Globe, by M. Patricia Marchak. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1995. 404 pp. $49.95 cloth, $19.95 paper.

In *Logging the Globe*, Marchak takes on the global manifestations of themes she first explored in *Green Gold*, her seminal contribution to the study of forest-imbedded communities. The new book sweeps broadly over the forest industry and society from its roots in industrialized Scandinavia to the timber-mining invasions of tropical rain forests and the establishment of fast-growing plantations on natural grasslands and degraded secondary forests in the Southern Hemisphere. Case studies of five producing regions (British Columbia, Thailand, Indonesia, Brazil, and Chile) and one consuming region (Japan) comprise the data and illustrate the broader points.

The power of the book comes as it draws links between communities separated by thousands of kilometres and great spans of culture. For example, Marchak demonstrates how logs exported from the US Pacific Northwest pressure rural Japanese communities traditionally dependent on forest-

products manufacturing. These social effects of globalization are as important as are the more-studied economic ones (e.g., Perez-Garcia's work showing that environmentally related harvest reductions in the US Pacific Northwest largely show up as increased harvests elsewhere in the world and that the total area logged each year actually rises as a consequence of the relatively high timber volumes found in the Pacific Northwest). Understanding such linkages is critical as we examine domestic policies about our own forests. Think globally while acting locally.

For readers of *BC Studies*, Marchak's analysis of British Columbia might be of greatest interest. She describes the situation as that of a "captured state," where Crown lands (which comprise about 95 per cent of all the forest land in the province) nominally managed in the public interest are actually controlled by companies through a client provincial government and captured bureaucracy. While my own personal experience and study of forestry in the province dates only to the beginning of this decade, a wide body of facts appears to falsify this interpretation. For example, in 1988 the conservative Social Credit government of the day unilaterally and without compensation "clawed back" 5 per cent of all volume promised under replaceable timber licences, and changed the terms of the licences with the effect of adding over $500 million in costs not previously agreed to. And again, in 1994, the provincial government — this time a socialist one — increased stumpage payments by an estimated $450 million, added at least a similar amount in new regulatory costs, and further weakened the property rights embodied in long-term tenures. Over a full business cycle, the returns to capital in the BC forest sector are now so low that securities analysts publicly question the wisdom of investing in it. It is difficult to reconcile these facts with Marchak's client-state characterization of the situation in BC.

Similarly, Marchak talks of BC's "seriously depleted timber reserves" (p. 116). No doubt the province faces serious challenges in managing its forests. Yet of the sixty million hectares of forest she mentions at the chapter's beginning, perhaps some eight to nine million hectares have ever been logged (and some of this total has already been logged more than once). At current harvest rates, it will take nearly a century to cut the timber now standing on the so-called "productive, operable" lands, a category which includes not even half the total forest land base. Also ignored by Marchak is the fact that, in the last thirty years, the area of forest in BC over 100 years old has actually *increased* by about seven million hectares. And each day brings new evidence that BC's secondary forests will grow at much higher rates than have been envisioned in virtually all of our timber supply planning. In short, the analysis of British Columbia relies far too heavily on a conventional but contrafactual wisdom.

Ironically, the current restrictions on timber supply in the province derive from the policies of the government Marchak claims is controlled by the companies. While there is no absolute shortage of economically attractive timber to harvest, much of it is indeed unavailable either because of

bureaucratically determined rules putatively designed to protect environmental values or because of the enormously complex administrative structure standing between the right to log and the roar of the chainsaw.

The book contains numerous minor errors, ranging from the misspelling of names to incorrect mathematical units. A scholar of Marchak's stature deserves better editing than this.

In the end, Marchak asks about communities, "are they worth saving?" She answers: "Human life may depend on the survival of communities as much as trees depend on larger ecosystems . . . Real economic development . . . will depend on creating economic capacities that sustain, not just individuals, but more—viable human communities." No thoughtful person will disagree with this objective. *Logging the Globe* is brilliant when Marchak sticks to this theme but falters when she strays into the less familiar territory of economics and forestry. Hold your breath in those sections, and learn from the book what is good.

University of British Columbia CLARK S. BINKLEY

All Possible Worlds: Utopian Experiments in British Columbia, by Justine Brown. Vancouver: New Star, 1995. 96 p. Illus. $16 paper.

British Columbia has been the location of many communities founded to practise versions of the good life, most of them known only to the residents, their neighbours, and an unsympathetic government. This short book provides a popular introduction to a range of these communities.

The author makes it clear that in trying to understand these communities she is also coming to grips with her own childhood on one of them, and the best sections by far are those in which she deals with the communities from the "Sixties." This is also where she had original sources with which to work and, as a result, adds to what had been known.

The book is both uneven and unsure of what it is. The Sixties material is the outline of a serious contribution to scholarship; the rest is a quick survey of communities ranging from the almost unknown to the widely studied. But, given only ninety-six pages, the author covers a lot of ground.

Brown begins with Metlakatla, a late nineteenth-century community among the Tsimshian led by an Anglican lay minister, which strikes me as a bit out of place since it was a missionary created community. But, while the imposition of Victorian dress, a choir of Tsimshian singing the Messiah, and a Tsimshian brass band clearly says that this is a colonial "utopian experiment," it is a powerful reminder that our conceptions of what constitutes significant improvement change over time. Metlakatla is also striking because, when we look at so much Sixties and post-Sixties communitarianism, we see the colonizers trying to adopt a romanticized version of the way

of pre-colonial life of the colonized. The "tribalism" of the later communities is trying to recreate what their predecessors worked to destroy and replace.

While the missionaries tried to impose their version of the good life on the original inhabitants, British Columbia was the site of a number of experiments where Europeans settled precisely because they found a space in which to create their own version of utopia. The Norwegian Bella Coola (although originating in Minnesota rather than Norway), the Finnish Sointula, and the Russian Doukhobors are the best known examples of immigrant communities trying to find methods of coping with a new country. Bella Coola and Sointula were attempts to solve social and economic problems among existing immigrants; the Doukhobors were a persecuted Russian sect that emigrated to Canada in search of religious freedom only but found continued persecution. The treatment of the Doukhobors is a classic example of the stupidity of government in dealing with difference. Sointula is much better known in Finland than it is in Canada, and there is a substantial literature on it in Finnish.

But the focus of the book is on the Sixties communes, some of which still exist, and here Brown makes a serious if limited contribution to scholarship through the use of original documents. The British Columbia communes were a varied lot. A number were based around people from the US fleeing the draft, a pattern that had Second World War precedents. Others were Hippies trying to return to the land and drop out of the rat race. Brown documents one, CEEDS or Community Education and Economic Development Society, that was established as an explicitly political commune and still flourishes. This community is unusual because the many survivors from the communal upsurge of the Sixties and Seventies are more likely to be religious rather political. CEEDS has shown a remarkable adaptability, apparently achieved by taking seriously the necessity for continued self-criticism, a regularly recognized need that is rarely acted upon.

There is some carelessness in the text, particularly when reference is made to communities outside Canada. For example, on page 23 Brook Farm is referred to as an "arts community" and Oneida as a "free love experiment," both statements that would have been corrected by reading any of the vast contemporary scholarly literature on these communities.

The focus on British Columbia is sometimes a bit overdone. On page 21, the author notes that the Metlakatla community founded a New Metlakatla in Alaska, and then she simply stops. At least a sentence should have been added telling us something about what happened. And the section on the Emissaries of the Divine Light notes that there are a number of communities outside of British Columbia, mentioning Colorado, England, France, and South Africa. It would have been worth letting the reader in on the fact that some of these communities have hundreds of members and have existed for decades.

But Brown has provided an amazing amount in ninety-six pages, and I hope that others will follow her lead, collect the original material that current

and former members of these communities have stored under their beds, and donate it to libraries so that future histories can go deeper.

University of Missouri-St. Louis LYMAN TOWER SARGENT

The Eternal Forest, by George Godwin. Introduction by George Woodcock. Vancouver: Godwin Books, 1994 (first published in 1929). xxxii, 318 pp. Photos. $19.95 paper, $32.95 cloth.

This new edition of a book, published originally by Appletons of New York in 1929, provides a rare glimpse into life in the Lower Fraser Valley immediately prior to the First World War. It is, in fact, much more than a reissued novel. Robert Thompson, an academic-turned-publisher, and the nephew of George Godwin, has added greatly to the value of the original text by providing extracts from the author's journal, recent and period photographs, and a series of notes. Passages from Godwin's journal enable us to understand more fully the significance of particular sections of the text — connecting the voices of his characters to his own political views, or the emotions of the central figure in the novel to the intimate details of his own personal life. Taken together, the journal extracts and the notes offer the reader an unusual degree of assurance that *The Eternal Forest* can be appreciated not simply for its aesthetic qualities but also as a source of historical understanding.

Godwin and his wife, Dorothy, exchanged the comfort of their middle-class milieu in England for the romance of the pioneer life. In 1912 they arrived in the Fraser Valley and sank their 500 pounds sterling into a house and a few acres of bush in Whonnock (Ferguson's Landing in the novel). *The Eternal Forest* describes the society they encountered. There are the resourceful Olsens — farmers, fishers, miners, and carpenters — who have all the skills to endure and prosper in the wilderness, and the patient, humble Swede, Johansson, who sweats and suffers but who eventually owns a fine farm and the first Ford in the district. Old Man Dunn, the self-educated Yorkshireman, is the local sage whose socialist and cooperative views help shape the collective critique of Vancouver realtors, provincial politicians, and all kinds of promoters and boosters whose schemes bring ruin to the gullible or desperate. There is the voluptuous Mrs. Armstrong, who takes in loggers and "serve[s] her boarders' fare out with the sauce of sex" (60), and whose house resounds with disorderly delights throughout the winter months. The Church of England vicar, Mr. Corley, disapproves of Mrs. Armstrong, but then he despises most of the citizens of Ferguson's Landing, for few accord him any respect and fewer still attend his services. He longs for the certainty, hierarchy, and decorum that he left. There is Blanchard, the storekeeper dispensing provisions and gossip and mail, playing postmaster, thanks to Bob England, an old-timer and political broker who has secured Blanchard's

appointment through his connections in the provincial capital. Such little acts of patronage tie hamlets like the Landing to the webs of influence being woven in the cities. And on the margins of this society are others, identified as Red Men, Orientals, Japs, and Hindus, viewed by the settlers with condescension, but also with fear.

Enter a couple referred to simply as the 'Newcomers' whose experiences and responses are essentially those of George and Dorothy Godwin. Leaving the new arrivals nameless is a curious device in the novel, interposing a screen of privacy between these characters and the rest of the cast, and between them and the reader. It is as though the author cannot quite decide whether the Newcomers should really be the central characters or relegated to more marginal positions from which they can play the detached observers or chorus. There is not much interaction between the Newcomers and the locals, and at the end of it all, Newcomer (and, even more markedly, his wife) remain, in some important ways, unrevealed. There seems to be some artistic uncertainty here.

But that aside, there is much to enjoy and admire in this work. Godwin writes lyrically about the landscape and especially about the forest, mixing the townsman's newly discovered joy in physical labour and naive desire to discipline and tame the bush with an appreciation of the immense resilience of nature and the enduring spiritual value of woods and wilderness. *The Eternal Forest* tells of struggle and failure, despair and defeat, but it also records moments of profound self-discovery. Newcomer was unsure what he was seeking when he left England. Specifying what he was escaping was easy enough — the stultifying rigidities of a class society — but what was he looking for and what did he find? In the wilderness, for the first time, he is able to think clearly about life. Here it is reduced to stark simplicity and that which is truly important becomes plain. Towards the end of the book though, there is a more profound answer: Newcomer experiences an epiphany.

Godwin's novel documents an individual's failure and moments of revelation, but it also records collective experience, and through it we can see how there emerged in this province different economies and different cultures — the metropolitan and the rural — and how their opposed interests became the bases for a political order that survived until very recently. Exhausted by the effort of clearing the land, unable to produce enough from their small enterprises to survive, some settlers were easy targets for the promoters of get-rich-quick schemes — buying land where a railroad might stop, purchasing shares in never-to-be-realized oil fields in the valley. They and others were often forced to sell the plots in which they had invested so much, and when they did, they found targets for their frustration — the Chinese, who (they claimed) had taken over Lulu Island and now dominated the market for produce, or the Japanese, who were buying up the farms. Old Man Dunn explained: "It's the Jap's purpose to get this Province by peaceful penetration" (p. 92).

In this book we begin to appreciate how the Fraser Valley became such a fertile place for conservative populism and even for outright racism. Godwin

puts the observations about the Japanese into the mouth of his least conservative character. Old Dunn is not trying to incite racial antipathy. But the same cannot be said for articles that appeared in *Maclean's* while Godwin (back in England) was polishing the manuscript. On 15 October 1921, in the first of two articles, "Will Canada Go Yellow?" we find statistics for the very area in which Ferguson's Landing (Whonnock) lies, charting the growth of Japanese ownership and reporting, without challenge, the popular theory that this was part of an invasion being orchestrated from Tokyo.

But this is not a political novel. It is fiction woven from personal experience containing acute and verifiable observation of an emerging society. It reflects, naturally, many views that are today regarded as outmoded, a few even reprehensible. The reader can have fun exploring Godwin's own sympathies not only by inferring them from the text, but also by checking them against the journal extracts. Taken as a whole, this book gives us a very good sociological understanding of the early struggles of settlers, the colonial culture they inhabited, and the social relations that nurtured their suspicion of the city, corporate capitalism, and distant government.

Robert Thompson is to be congratulated for republishing this book. It deserves a broad readership.

University of British Columbia BRIAN ELLIOTT

The Geology of Southern Vancouver Island: a field guide, by C.J. Yorath and H.W. Nasmith, Victoria.: Orca Book Publishers, 1995. 172 pp. Illus., maps. $14.95 paper.

Geology of the Kelowna Area and Origin of the Okanagan Valley British Columbia, by Murray A. Roed, with contributions from Don A. Dobson et al. Kelowna: Kelowna Geology Commitee, Geology Department, Okanagan University College, 1995. 183 pp. Illus., maps. $19.95 paper.

There are two types of geological field guides. One is intended to inform groups of professional geologists on specialized field trips through a region, and the other is for the intelligent layperson with little background in geology. The two books here are successful examples of the latter type, engendered by the same process: as the teaching of earth science at an institution of tertiary education in a particular region intensifies, those teaching it first construct field-trips for students, then see the need for a comprehensive guidebook to the region, with input from local earth scientists and engineers. Each of the resultant guides informs both the student and the intelligent citizen of the geology of an important region of British Columbia, and each concentrates on describing sites close to a major regional centre of population.

Geological knowledge of the region around Victoria covered in *The Geology Of Southern Vancouver Island* reflects the century-long presence in the city of the provincial Geological Survey Branch; the mapping, carried out by the Geological Survey of Canada since the 1870s, the creation of the Pacific Geoscience Centre at Sidney in the 1970s, and the recent expansion of instruction and research in earth sciences at the University of Victoria. The guide is in two parts, the first dealing with landscape, geological history and structure, mining, and earthquakes, and the second with descriptions of geology encountered at twenty localities in and around Victoria. The English is immaculate, the style terse and informative, and the text is accompanied by clear black-and-white line drawings and black-and-white photographs. Directions to each site are satisfactorily detailed. Rock types and component minerals are described, radiogenic ages are cited, and the appearance of outcrop, structural, and glacial features is carefully explained. A glossary explains technical terms. One aspect of regional geology not covered is evidence for large earthquakes that strike the seaward portion of the underlying Cascadia subduction zone every few hundred years. If such an earthquake were to occur today, damage to buildings and other infrastructure on Vancouver Island is to be expected. Evidence for such major earthquakes in the past is only now being investigated, however, and one hopes that it will be featured in the next edition.

Geology of the Kelowna Area stems from expanded earth science instruction at Okanagan University College. A committee of geologists and engineers have collaborated to write this guide, with chapters on geologic time, landscapes, bedrock history, glaciation, aboriginal archeology, water on the surface and below the ground, notable geological sites, geological hazards, mining, and future development. The history of mining includes discussion of environmental concerns. Appendices contain directions for two field trips, one to general features and one emphasizing bedrock geology. Accompanying coloured photographs, maps, and diagrams are of high quality, reflecting many hours of careful computer-aided drafting and solid financial support by foundations and local individuals and businesses. An emphasis on geological hazards, waterways and groundwater, and environmental aspects of agricultural, mining, and suburban development reflects an awareness that rapid population growth in the Okanagan Valley threatens the fragile ecosystem of this beautiful, semi-arid region, unique in Canada.

British Columbians live in and interact with a natural environment that is unimaginably old, has a complex history, and is vulnerable to abuse. Authors of both guides do an excellent job of collecting, organizing, and illustrating regional geology, and perform a valuable service in educating inhabitants and visitors to see, beneath the superficial beauty of the landscape, fascinating features produced during the long evolution of our planet, and in bringing to light the dangers of uninformed and unconstrained development.

University of British Columbia RICHARD L. CHASE

A History of Canadian Architecture, by Harold Kalman. Volumes 1 and 2. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1994. Vol. 1: xi, 478 pp.; Vol. 2: vi, 455 pp. Illus. $95.00 (set) cloth.

The appearance of Kalman's work is a landmark in the writing of Canadian architectural history, for, despite its limitations, the comprehensive survey of a field does have value, and we have not seen such a thing since Alan Gowans's highly personal *Building Canada* (1966) and Pierre Mayrand and John Bland's *Three Centuries of Architecture in Canada* (1971). Backed by a prestigious board of advisers, Kalman has quarried material from a host of period and modern sources and assembled it into a coherent, readable narrative — no mean feat. Among the work's merits are its abundant illustrations, including line drawings by David Byrnes; but the result is that, despite a publication grant from the Getty Foundation of California, the two-volume set is expensive, and the volumes are not sold separately.

Although no single ordering principle is followed, broadly speaking Kalman takes the Laurentian thesis of historiography as his premise, moving in volume one from east to west, so that readers looking for material on British Columbia find it only in the last chapter (eight) and in volume two. There is a lot of it, and one comes away rather proud of BC's achievements. One senses how hard Kalman has worked to stitch in examples from this province. This is no accident, for he taught for a time in the Fine Arts Department at UBC and now lives and practises as an architectural historian and preservation consultant in Vancouver.

Chapter 8 in the first volume deals with the settlement of the west coast. It begins with a treatment of Native building that is a sound, compact introduction to the subject, then goes on to the colonial and early provincial periods. A mini-narrative of nineteenth-century Victoria — one of many short local histories scattered through the book — is a distillation of Martin Segger's treatment in *Victoria* (1979), of which a new edition will appear shortly. Then, in a section on the interior, the Royal Engineers' activity of surveying forts and town sites and building simple administrative buildings and neo-Gothic churches is traced, along with the jerry-built gold rush towns and the ranches and wayside inns that resulted. But is this architecture, properly speaking? Why not just read an up-to-date history — say Jean Barman's *The West beyond the West* (rev. 1996) — for surely the buildings are merely deduced from their materials and purposes? I would argue that, although (as often in volume 1) considerations of structure, materials, and building-types predominate, it is helpful to see these in the context of architectural aesthetics.

Towards 1900 architecture as such arrived in force in BC in the work of Rattenbury, Hooper, Maclure, and their generation, whom we meet in volume 2, chapters 9 to 11. If the Chateau-Style hotels along the CPR route were projections of Montreal's and London's ideas of the rugged West, BC made quite original contributions in other fields. The provincial Parliament Buildings in Victoria, of 1893-98, by the entrepreneurial whiz-kid Ratten-

bury, just in from Yorkshire, was the first domed legislature in Canada, a form he adapted (adding a Britannic flavour) from American state-legislatures and the buildings of the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Samuel Maclure's houses in Victoria and Vancouver, treated in chapter 11, are among the most original and representative Arts & Crafts and Tudor Revival designs in Canada. These are path-breaking, and in general the importance of BC to the national architectural narrative grows through the twentieth century. In chapter 12, on town planning, several towns in BC appear — Cumberland, Robert Dunsmuir's hellhole for colliers' families on Vancouver Island; Prince Rupert, the Canadian Northern Railway's supposed answer to Vancouver; and Kitimat, a Garden Town laid out by American utopian town-planner Clarence Stein in the early 1950s. Again BC plays a key role in chapter 14, on interwar architecture, in discussions of both traditional, historicizing architecture — Neo-Tudor houses, Collegiate Gothic churches, and the like — and the forward-looking Deco and Moderne family of styles. BC just may be the best place in Canada to see Deco in action.

The province comes fully into its own in chapter 15, "Modernism and Beyond," which begins with a mini-history of Vancouver, Canada's prototypically modern city. Kalman takes the accepted line in architectural studies that International Modernism made its first big splash in Canada on the west coast in the work of pioneering Vancouver firms, was only later taken up in stodgier centres like Toronto — from which it radiated through central Canada — and realized some of its finest achievements on the coast, particularly in the work of Arthur Erickson, who went on to become Canada's first architectural "superstar." Seemingly no part of Canada is as identified with Modernism as is Vancouver, and the work of leading-edge designers here today, such as Patkau Architects and Richard Henriquez, takes meditation on the Modern as its theme. But it is precisely this that leads me to question the chapter's title, for are we in fact "beyond" Modernism? I do not think so. It looked that way ten or fifteen years ago, but since about 1990 a consensus has crystallized around a certain, slightly punk, Neo-Modernism as the dominant style in architecture and design. Classicizing "Post-modernism" is on the wane — though Paul Merrick's Cathedral Place and a miniature clone of it in downtown Victoria, just opened, may make you wonder — and enigmatic, deconstructive New Modernism is the rule. But this is a debate for another forum; what matters here is that BC, its architects, and its architectural school (at UBC) are viewed as leaders in Canadian architectural design and discourse. Anyone who doubts that should visit Moshe Safdie's Library Square in Vancouver, the most controversial complex built in the Lower Mainland for a generation — though its pink concrete "wrapper" articulated in the spirit of the Roman Coliseum may seem to deny what I just said about Postmodernism. The library opened too late to figure in Kalman's history, but it aptly illustrates Vancouver's leadership in Canadian design of the 1990s.

University of Victoria CHRISTOPHER A. THOMAS

Ron Thom: The Shaping of an Architect, by Douglas Shadbolt. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1995. viii, 165 pp. Illus. $40.00 cloth.

A book written by an objective architect-educator assessing the particular achievement of a creative architect makes for stimulating reading, for the maturation of individual designers has been largely replaced in the architectural historical literature by the theoretical or ideological reconstruction of the cultural construct. Yet, however much architects/artists may be directly or insidiously affected by the contemporary socio-political and cultural fabric, their diversity of response requires thoughtful consideration of matters of individual talent, training, predilection, and circumstance. This is not to recommend putting creativity upon a pedestal formed of conventionalized Western humanist aesthetics and self-serving connoisseurship. Rather, it is to acknowledge how superficial our understanding of the creative process, in terms other than merely subjective literary appreciation or quasi-scientific models, remains. Architecture, by simultaneously addressing a wide range of material and technical constraints as well as theoretical and expressive opportunities, affords an excellent means to interrelate and advance beyond those discussions.

Ron Thom articled with Sharp and Thompson Berwick Pratt, the leading Modernist architectural firm in Western Canada during the postwar Reconstruction era. But, in contradiction to their abstract functionalist values and in company with his friend and colleague, Fred T. Hollingsworth, Thom early articulated the organic and oriental constituents of the work of F.L. Wright and the (San Francisco) Bay Region architects. Even Thom and Hollingsworth, equally adept at architectural rendering and the manipulation of space and form, developed noticeably different design idioms before either of them received the professional imprimatur of membership in the Architectural Institute of British Columbia. Thom, moreover, would strive for a larger and more diverse practice that enabled him to tackle monumental architectural expression. He transmogrified a sensibility for the tailoring of intimate domestic environments into architectonic strategies for managing and celebrating institutional operation. In this process he expanded a command of spaces in form into a command of forms in space. Nurtured in the more liberal, or unformed, Vancouver architectural scene, and intensely conscious of the invigorating setting, Thom actually produced his finest architecture in the geographically blander and socially staid Ontario. Massey College at the University of Toronto is his most subtle and enduring, if synthetically historicized and least Canadian, building. Nonetheless, Thom's interpretation of imposed collegiate specification demonstrates the symbolic and sensual potency of Modernist principles. His major commission was for Trent University near Peterborough, for which he further reconstituted the elitist Oxbridge collegiate typology for a supposedly egalitarian higher education; indeed, the picturesquely disposed planar blocks of the campus evoke a dilettante nostalgia: "Is there honey still for tea/ beside the Otanbee."

Shadbolt's review of those university commissions is convincing, not least because it clarifies recent myths of authorship of the BC Electric Company's head office at Vancouver and continued in the aborted provincial offices and court house scheme. Despite the advent of the architect as "superstar" of populist culture, postwar practice has compounded teamwork both within architectural offices and across the design-related professions. Thom himself assembled an inner group of able *jeunes* at Thompson Berwick Pratt — including leading members of the contemporary Vancouver profession such as Paul Merrick, Barry Downs, and Richard Archambault — to assist in the design and execution of the later batch of what Shadbolt calls "Houses West." The evolution of architectural practice over the last four decades is also discussed by Shadbolt, together with the impact of changes in the economy and patronage.

In fact most readers might have welcomed more extensive analyses of the character of the times and of the architect's tally of work. Shadbolt so adeptly summons up the experience of looking at and being affected by architecture that he could have included more of Thom's houses. For instance, the idiosyncratic nature of the second house Thom designed for the contractor Alvin Narod, jettied out on boldly articulated concrete abutments over the eastern strand of English Bay in Vancouver, would be underscored by a comparison with the low cubic residence he had built for the family nearly two decades earlier. Likewise, a fuller comparison of Thom's university commissions with those of Arthur Erickson and John Andrews would have enlarged upon such recent general histories as Harold Kalman's *A History of Canadian Architecture* (1994). Similarly, Shadbolt might have pursued further the design stimuli behind the last phase of Thom's architecture. An interest in the work of James Stirling seems evident in the Arts and Social Science Building at Queens University, while some awareness of structures at the Regent Park (London) Zoo is manifest in Thom's contribution to the zoo in Toronto. A list of Thom's completed and projected architecture, plans, and fuller information on dates and locations in the captions would also enhance the book.

That said, Shadbolt has fulfilled the brief implied by the title. In accounting for the personal and experiential constituents of Thom's architecture, Shadbolt has justly established the significance of his career. Superbly illustrated and well argued, the text will advance the appreciation of postwar Canadian architecture during this time of apparent lack of national identity — showing that Canadian culture is derived but not derivative, respectful of tradition but not obsequious, unostentatious and even self-effacing yet assured and distinctive, and regionally conscious rather than regionally segregated. Lastly, the book will illuminate the art of architecture for the general reader.

University of British Columbia RHODRI WINDSOR LISCOMBE

The Wilderness Profound: Victorian Life on the Gulf of Georgia, by Richard Somerset Mackie. Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1995. xiii, 314 pp.. Illus., maps. $19.95 paper.

This book has a double nature as biography and local history. It is both a biography of George Fawcett Drabble (1833-1901), one of the leading figures of the agricultural settlement founded at Comox in the 1860s, and a history of the early years of the Comox settlement to the end of the nineteenth century.

At Comox Drabble was often viewed as a man with mysterious antecedents. Richard Mackie has elucidated some of the unusual features of his private life. He shows that Drabble departed from England for Vancouver Island in 1862 in strange circumstances, leaving behind not only an apparently prosperous career as a farmer and maltster but also a wife, who died soon afterwards, and children, who never joined their father in the colony. He aptly illustrates Drabble's varied domestic life by placing side by side photographs of two of his sons, an English son clothed in the conventional suit of a middle-class Edwardian gentleman, and a British Columbia son wearing the impressive ceremonial regalia of a Kwakiutl chief, a rank inherited through this son's mother.

Mackie concludes, however, that in his private life Drabble must remain to the end a shadowy and enigmatic figure. He concentrates therefore on Drabble's public activities in the Comox district. During various periods from the 1860s to the 1890s he was a farmer, a grist-mill operator, and a coastal trader, but his most important role was as a land surveyor, a profession in which he had been trained in England. He surveyed many Comox pre-emptions, and laid out and supervised the construction of roads and bridges. He served as public works superintendent, government agent, school trustee, as magistrate for many years, and in numerous other capacities. So extensive were his activities that Mackie is able to construct a regional history around them that embraces much of the northern Gulf of Georgia, and to reach beyond the biography of a single figure to bring in many other early Comox settlers.

Mackie's starting point in his research is a series of little booklets in which Drabble recorded not only his field notes as a surveyor but also many of his other activities. In addition, Mackie makes good use of the existing histories of the early Comox settlement, most notably Eric Duncan's classic first-hand account, *From Shetland to Vancouver Island*, which went through three editions when it was published in Edinburgh in the 1930s. He goes again over ground covered in some chapters of the most comprehensive local history, *Land of Plenty: A History of the Comox District* (1987) by D.E. Isenor and others, but makes many valuable additions. More fully than any previous historian he draws on the relevant governmental and legal records in the provincial archives: these records are so extensive that one may sometimes wonder why the early Comox settlers constantly complained of government neglect. He makes excellent use, too, of early Comox diaries and letters, and

has gained access to some important sources in private hands, for example the diaries of William and Mary Harmston, that have not been available to previous historians. He has been well served by his publishers, and has included good sets of maps and illustrations.

Mackie has brought to his study not only much fresh archival research but also a lively style of presentation. He combines clarity of outline and argument with abundant interesting social and economic detail. He conveys well the quality of life in an isolated settlement that already had some twenty-five years of development behind it when Mary Harmston recorded in her diary the news of the destruction by fire of the new town of Vancouver in 1886. He brings out the unique features of a place that like the Gulf Islands could be reached only by boat but unlike them was on the edge of a great hinterland of forest and mountain, wilderness profound indeed, in which early settlers occasionally became lost never to be seen again. A main theme of his historical narrative is the diversification from the agricultural settlement of the 1860s into logging and coal mining in the 1880s and 1890s, as it became apparent that much of the district's future would lie in the exploitation of the resources of this hinterland.

While Mackie shows appreciation for the work of Drabble and other Comox pioneers in establishing in very difficult circumstances the physical, social, and institutional infrastructure that still determines much of the character of the district, he does not write in the simple triumphal mode that might once have prevailed. He never allows us to forget that the new Comox settlement of the 1860s was established in an area of very much older Native settlements. He recognizes that the figure of the surveyor is now often seen as the very symbol of the destruction of the natural world and its indigenous inhabitants. He comments: "Drabble assigned permanent section or lot numbers to all the land he surveyed, and he obliterated Native cultural, spiritual, or economic sites beneath a cartographic grid of squares, rectangles, and straight lines." He notes how "shamefully" small were the areas marked on the new maps as Indian reserves throughout the Gulf of Georgia. This volume is evidence that more than 500 years after Columbus the writing of local history has become increasingly complex and increasingly informed by an awareness of larger issues. One might perhaps paraphrase the axiom that all politics is local and conclude that all history is local.

Emeritus, University of Toronto ALLAN PRITCHARD

Historic Nelson: The Early Years, by John Norris. Lantzville: Oolichan Books, 1995. 320 pp. Illus., maps. $36.95 cloth, $21.95 paper.

The author seems to have read every existing record of the earliest White visitors to the West Kootenays. He links these sketchy references together to

paint a word picture of the district before European and American settlers imposed any structural changes. Finally, on page 95, the future town of Nelson is surveyed by a visiting bureaucrat from Victoria.

Each chapter begins with a droll sentence introducing the principal character or activity about to be described. On occasion, this introduction advises those eager to find out whether plans in the previous chapter were implemented to "turn to Chapter __ and return to this page later." When buildings appear on the anticipated main streets (Baker and Vernon), very early photographs are shown and the builders/settlers described in detail. The final chapter in this first volume of the history of Nelson describes a socially active centre, with school, churches, railway terminal, a sanitary inspector, and a men's club — a community rich enough to apply for, and receive, city status.

There are a minimum of footnotes (all useful). The book would be improved by the inclusion of a modern map of Nelson, which would be consulted when reference is made to a building site at the corner of _____ and _____ Streets.

British Columbia Historical News NAOMI MILLER

Red Flags & Red Tape: The Making of a Labour Bureaucracy, by Mark Leier. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995. 245 p. $50 cloth, $17.95 paper.

According to Mark Leier in *Red Flags & Red Tape*, labour bureaucracy is "a question of who has power over whom, rather than a conflict over ideology" (p. 34). Trade union officials, innately, are neither more nor less conservative or radical than rank-and file members, and socialist bureaucrats behave little differently from labourist ones. Instead, the one consistent belief shared by all labour bureaucrats is "that the working class must be managed, that the masses cannot determine their struggle" (p. 34). This conviction that they alone understand and can defend the true interests of the working class leads labour bureaucrats to make the promotion and preservation of their own position of power their top priority, which in turn necessitates compromise and accommodation with other social classes. Using the experience of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council (VTLC) during its formative years, 1889-1910, as his example, Leier explores this complex interplay between bureaucracy, class, and ideology to answer the question posed by German sociologist Werner Sombart in 1906: Why is there no socialism in North America?

Leier performs this task in three stages. First, he provides a critical review of the theoretical debate on the labour bureaucracy, identifying the relative strengths and weaknesses of the divergent interpretations forwarded by Weber, Michels, Perlman, Lenin, and Lipset, as well as summarizing the

recent discussion among British labour historians on the subject. Second, he traces the structural evolution of the labour bureaucracy in Vancouver, looking at those institutions and practices that helped to strengthen the VTLC's authority over the membership while at the same time creating a body of unionists whose direct interests and experiences were once removed from those of the rank and file. He also demonstrates how the VTLC shaped the contours of union, and by extension working-class, culture in Vancouver according to its own perception of labour unity, even as it drew upon and institutionalized certain working-class traits, notably racism and sexism, that limited the scope of that unity. Finally, Leier re-assesses the struggle between labourists and socialists within the VTLC as a battle to secure bureaucratic control over the rank and file, rather than as an ideological conflict. "Although labourists had started the VTLC, the socialists were quick to make use of the early bureaucracy and to strengthen it," he concludes. "In this sense, bureaucracy may be seen as being removed from ideology, for conservatives and radicals alike worked to preserve and extend the labour bureaucracy" (p. 180).

Red Flags & Red Tape is a finely crafted, well-written work that challenges many assumptions and perceptions about Canadian labour in this period. Curiously, given the particularly bureaucratic nature of Canada's modern labour movement, Leier is the first Canadian historian to devote a full-length study to the development of labour bureaucracy. His use of this concept as an organizing principle enables him to gain fresh insight from already well-plumbed source material, mainly Vancouver union records and local newspapers, and his book is a valuable addition to existing works by Ross McCormack, Robert A.J. McDonald, Peter Ward, and others. For example, Leier convincingly demonstrates that previous labour historians have exaggerated the extent and importance of socialist influence within the VTLC in the years 1900-03, and that even when socialists did later gain control of the bureaucracy, little changed as far as the rank and file were concerned. Leier's approach to his subject also places him within the growing ranks of a "third generation" of Canadian labour historians, scholars whose works seek to combine the empirical focus of the first generation with the theoretical emphases of the second. By bringing unions back into the centre of labour history in an imaginative and illuminating way, Leier is able to cast light "on those historical divisions that helped fragment the working class" and which kept them from uniting (p. 9).

There are problems with, or weaknesses to, Leier's study, however. Three are identified here, not so much by way of criticism, but as encouragement to explore the relationship between bureaucracy, class, and ideology further and more rigorously.

First, Leier defines the labour bureaucracy's power as "the ability to make others do what they would not have done otherwise," and, as mentioned, he identifies its sources as authority and the control of information (p. 34). However, identifying and describing the structures through which power

relations operate tells us little about how effective that power was in practice, or how it was perceived by those on whom it was exercised. Leier is dismissive of the "ambiguities and turbidity" of Foucauldian analysis, but some greater discussion of the construction and conceptualization of power seems necessary (p. 186, n. 10).

Second, Leier gears his examination of labour bureaucracy to answering Sombart's question, and within the limited confines of his analysis, his arguments and reasoning appear convincing. But surely, there are far more important and overwhelming obstacles in the path of socialism than the restrictive influence of labour bureaucrats. As Leier himself admits, "When we speak of the power of the labour leader . . . we do well to remember that it is a weak thing compared with that of capital and the state" (p. 35). This does not necessarily negate Leier's approach or focus, but it does suggest that he pay more attention to the state-capital nexus that operated in Vancouver during this period.

Third and finally, even if the existence of a labour bureaucracy renders socialism an improbable objective, then what are the alternatives open to the working class? The VTLC was more democratic than it was despotic, and would surely have succumbed to the popular will of the membership had large numbers expressed serious dissatisfaction with the rule of bureaucrats at the time. "If bureaucracy is to be eliminated," concludes Leier, "it will only be done when a revolutionary movement decides to do so, as part of a larger movement against economic and political oppression" (p. 184). This is little more than a reiteration of Rosa Luxemburg's recommendation to the German labour movement in 1906, when she too accused union officials of "bureaucratism and a certain narrowness of outlook" (*The Mass Strike, The Political Party and the Trade Unions.* Colombo, Ceylon: Young Socialist Publications, 1964, p. 72). Leier's own alternative suggestions to bureaucracy — the anarchist movement, the IWW, the 1960s' student protest movement, and the resurgence of left-wing politics in the former Soviet Union — hardly inspire hope. Further, none of these movements was without its own element of bureaucracy, lending more support to Robert Michels's maxim — "Who says organization, says oligarchy" — than Leier concedes.

Such doubts are raised in the spirit of advancing discussion on the role of labour bureaucracy in Canada. *Red Flags & Red Tape* is an important book and marks a significant advance in our understanding of the relationship between trade unions and the working class. That it leaves many questions unanswered leaves the door open for future debate.

Mount Royal College, Calgary DAVID BRIGHT