Book Reviews

The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia, by Jean Barman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991. xx, 430 pp. Illus., maps, tables. $35.00 cloth.

This book owes a good deal to Margaret Ormsby's centennial volume of 1958. Jean Barman acknowledges the debt by describing Margaret Ormsby's history as "an invaluable beginning point." Barman has also drawn on the explosion of recent research that has taken British Columbia's history in many independent directions. This expansion of the subject makes her attempt at synthesis a challenging and important enterprise. In addition, where she has found both Ormsby and the general body of secondary literature deficient, she has searched for the voices of contemporaries as expressed in diaries, memoirs, journals, and elsewhere. In her Introduction, Barman mentions Ormsby first, then the recent work of other historians and finally her own digging for personal material. The order of mention suggests the way in which she went about writing her book, and this is significant because her procedure has determined the content and structure. She has changed the shape of British Columbia's history, but not too much; and that will be welcomed by all who are looking for familiar landmarks while expecting a new emphasis.

When she discusses the colonial period, Barman follows the chronological and topical arrangement of Ormsby's history. The approach by sea, the land based fur trade, the early colonization of Vancouver Island, and the Fraser river gold rush are the building blocks of this narrative, with Bering, Quadra, Cook, Mackenzie, Fraser, Thompson, Simpson, McLaughlin, and Douglas appearing in familiar succession. All this is told in comparatively few pages. The life and times of James Douglas, which took up nearly a third of Ormsby's book, get less than half the space in this one. But the main purpose of the account remains a traditional one — explaining the evolution of European interest in the Northwest Coast. In 1958 Ormsby ended her history with the observation "British Columbia" was an apt

name for the province. Now we are not so sure. Barman finds the name deceptive: other people were involved besides the British. Yet she has not escaped the old construction of the province's early history, with its emphasis on questions of diplomacy and sovereignty and the establishment of a British presence. If there are other dimensions to this history, they have not come to the fore.

For the half-century from Confederation to the end of the First World War, we get a far more original treatment. Barman has moved the focal point of British Columbia history forward to this period by devoting a third of her book to it with five thematic chapters. Ormsby is no longer the guide and the concerns that surface reflect a more contemporary sensibility. Native Indians, who appear only briefly in Barman's discussion of the colonial period, have her attention for a full chapter in the post-Confederation era. Here she emphasizes the persistence and resilience of Native Indian society despite the negative features of Dominion Indian policy, economic change, and the racist attitudes of white society. Race is a persistent theme. A chapter on immigration and population growth encompasses the many minority elements that made up the province and the ethnic exclusiveness and racism that they faced. And a chapter on reform recognizes the blind spot of both the working class labour movement and middle class social reform movement on the subject of race. But race is only a part of the story. In describing the British Columbia of this period, Barman develops a variety of themes of current interest: a staples-based economy dominated by outside financial interests, a province divided in circumstance and attitude between the large urban cluster in the southern coastal region and the small dispersed communities of the hinterland, a distinctive political culture, and an ambivalence towards the rest of the country. The whole picture is multi-dimensional, and these five chapters are the heart and strength of the book.

Barman moves more rapidly through the balance of her account, compressing the 1918-45 years into a single — admittedly longer than average — chapter, devoting somewhat more space to the quarter century following the Second World War, and adding a short chapter to bring the story to 1990. Her discussion of the years since the Second World War gives particular significance to the social changes that softened the racial, gender, and class inequalities that she found so pronounced in British Columbia previously. All this goes well beyond Ormsby, not just in the period covered, but also in a sense of the subjects that a general history should address.

There is one other comparison that, inevitably, I find I make. In the two small corners of British Columbia's history in which I have a specialized

knowledge, *The West Beyond the West* offers some disappointing inaccuracies. On the same subjects, Margaret Ormsby's *British Columbia* gets the facts right; and I suspect that of the two books it remains the more authoritative.

Simon Fraser University HUGH JOHNSTON

Mutual Hostages: Canadians and Japanese during the Second World War, by Patricia Roy, J. L. Granatstein, Masako Iino, and Hiroko Takamura. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990. xii, 281 pp. Illus. $24.95 cloth.

This book is the undertaking of four historians, two in Canada, two in Japan, who embarked upon a comparative study of confinement practices of the Japanese and Canadian governments during World War II. Their stated objectives were to "set out what happened," without condoning or condemning, to question whether the two governments looked upon those under their control as "mutual hostages," to clarify differences in the two approaches, to determine what the two governments and peoples knew and believed about each other, and to understand the "divided loyalties," especially of Japanese Canadians.

As a comparative analysis the work meets limited success. The impressive number of archives consulted yielded much interesting material, but did not allow a comparison in the strict sense. The book ends up being almost entirely about the treatment of *Canadians* as hostages, including soldiers and civilians in Asia, but mainly Canadians of Japanese ancestry in Canada. Of the 218 pages of text, only 52 concern the Pacific War and/or the treatment of Canadian prisoners in Japanese hands. The balance of the book concerns almost entirely the treatment by the Canadian government of 21,000 Canadians of Japanese ancestry, and fewer than 5,000 civilian Japanese nationals who were living in Canada in 1941.[1]

A short introductory chapter on Japanese immigration to Canada, written from a diplomatic point of view, provides an excellent background for understanding the precarious position of Canadians of Japanese ancestry beginning in the late nineteenth century. This chapter underscores the

[1] Reference is often made to 21,000 Japanese Canadians (*including* 5,000 Japanese Nationals) uprooted from coastal British Columbia during the early years of the war. That figure does not include 1,000 people already outside the "protected zone," also affected by the measures against Japanese Canadians although not uprooted, or those who were born while the conditions of the War Measures Act were in effect, from December 1941 to March 1949 (a net increase of 4,000). 26,000 were thus affected by the actions of the Canadian government.

point that one cannot understand the events of the 1940s without reference to events of the previous six decades, although it also emphasizes the fact that the book is more concerned with the treatment of Japanese Canadians than with military matters.

Chapter 2 begins with an overview of the approach of war in the Pacific, and focuses upon development of the Canadian government's policy towards Japanese Canadians between 1939 and the bombing of Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, as well as the build-up of public "suspicions" of fifth-column activity on the part of Japanese Canadians sympathetic to Japan. Based on new evidence of discussions at official levels, a case is made that the Canadian government knew relatively little about Japanese Canadians and was rather ineffectual in finding out. There is, however, a twist, presented by the claim that

> the fairest thing that can be said almost a half century after the fact is that the RCMP and military intelligence had uncovered little hard information about possible subversion within the Japanese-Canadian community, if indeed the potential for any existed, because they lacked the necessary resources and competence. (p. 51)

To make such a claim is, to this reviewer's mind, not only highly speculative but prejudicially so. Their claim for dispassionate historiography notwithstanding, the authors had a choice at this point, between presenting the lack of evidence of subversion as an indication that probably none existed, or dwelling upon the *possibility* that subversion might have existed. They chose the latter. As a result, the discussion sheds little light upon the topic and detracts from the careful scholarship upon which most of the book is based.

A third chapter stands on its own as a short but informative account of the treatment of Canadian POWs and civilians in Hong Kong and Japan. This story is expanded in Chapter 7, where a discussion of Japanese Canadians and Japanese nationals in Canadian camps is combined with an account of the outcomes for Canadian prisoners in Asia. There is some discontinuity in the separation of these two chapters in the attempt to maintain the mutual hostages theme, but there is no doubt of the basis here for expansion into a book-length treatment of the topic.

Chapters 4 through 6, which make up the core of the book, shift to the treatment of Canadians of Japanese ancestry, documenting the process by which they were uprooted, interned, and dispersed. (They were not, however, "evacuated"; that euphemism should have been put to rest here). This is the first major work on the topic since substantial national archives of the time were made available to researchers, and these official sources

and a variety of others have been well exploited. The difficult challenges, the momentous decisions, the contradictions and the ironies that characterized this period for everyone concerned are revealed in a skilful interweaving of material from official documents, newspapers, political speeches, and correspondence. In several instances the personal circumstances of Japanese Canadians are used to highlight the complexity of the issues and the difficult decisions faced by families for whom nothing would ever again be simple.

It is a shame, nonetheless, that the authors chose to undertake very limited interviews with survivors of the government's actions during the 1940s. There is a legitimate debate about whether living memory is more accurate than archival memory; both may be highly selective. But the book would have been enriched both by the rich ethnographic information that can be available only to modern historians and by an attempt to come to terms with the contradictions that would inevitably have emerged between the written and the verbal record. The "remarkable" school system in the interior camps, for example, claimed to be a result of the British Columbia Security Commission's recognition of its "educational duties" (p. 132), should more appropriately be credited to the efforts of the Japanese-Canadian teachers and a few Christian missionaries. As it is, the book will suffer the indignation of thousands of Japanese Canadians who will not find that this story matches their memories.

Given the care that is given to archival detail, the lack of sensitivity to language is all the more curious. A few examples: frequent and jarring reference to Japanese Canadians as "Japanese"; reference to Canadian-born citizens sent to Japan as "repatriates"; reference to actions taken against Japanese Canadians as an "evacuation." This was the sort of terminology used by the government of the time, of course, but in failing to acknowledge the ideological effect of such language, the authors have sacrificed critical interpretation and, deliberately or not, re-inscribed the patterns of prejudice. At the same time, the authors take pains to point out that only a few Japanese Canadians were, strictly speaking, "interned." I doubt that those who spent months in horse stalls at Hastings Park would find much meaning in this fine semantic distinction.

The first sentence of Chapter 4 illustrates one of dozens of instances where an insensitive, even provocative use of language conveys a misconception: "The Canadians in Hong Kong were the victims of military atrocities; the Japanese in Canada were the victims of civilian paranoia." The surface "truth" of the statement is not at issue. What offends is that in using this rhetorical device to revive the book's flagging theme of "mutual

hostages," the message reinforces the notion dominant prior to World War II that Canadians of Japanese ancestry were not *real* Canadians. It is precisely because many "other" Canadians at the time failed to distinguish "Japanese" from "Canadians of Japanese ancestry" and because they attributed a separate and subordinate place to Japanese Canadians (witness the cartoon reproduced on page 100 proclaiming "a Jap is a Jap") that the authors should have been more careful with and critical of their own representations, so as not to perpetuate prejudiced notions. Furthermore, while the authors go into the fine details of what the Canadian government did because they assumed Japanese Canadians were not *real* Canadians, they fail to address the belief itself.

There is, of course, a much more fundamental question of historiography here. This book takes the line that historians are dispassionate, objective, and value neutral, that they do not "condemn or condone" (p. xi) the events of the past. This reviewer simply disagrees. The facts do not "speak for themselves," they are constructed. They are chosen, judged, sorted, emphasized, or consigned to oblivion. Historians *do* make value judgements and to deny doing so is uncritical and can be dangerous. In this book the judgements are sometimes blatant, sometimes inserted between the lines, in innuendo and in what is *not* said. They come out nonetheless, and the book would have been the better for their acknowledgement.

In the final chapter, the theme of mutual hostages is again revived, as the various forms of confinement, as well as the various fears and prejudices that prompted the actions of both governments, are played off against each other in a final rounding out of the issues. They conclude that Canadians were far more obsessed with the dangers posed by Japan than were the Japanese with what might be going on in Canada, and they explain the Canadian government's actions towards its own nationals by pointing out that conditions of war stimulated pre-existing fears, prejudices and racial hatred to allow "precious few distinctions between Canadian citizens of Japanese origin and Japanese nationals" (p. 218). In the end, war itself is the decisive factor.

This work provides important information about circumstances in Canadian history that have as yet received too little scholarly attention. As an historical account it is uneven, with carefully researched sections interspersed with others that are highly speculative. Its analytical theme of "mutual hostages" is fundamentally flawed. Its failure to come to terms with issues of human rights in a book that is about the violation of human rights is disappointing. Its interpretation of the "facts," for Japanese Canadians, is bound to be controversial; but it is to be hoped that debate over

the facts will lead to better understanding not only of what happened, but of how it happened and of the difficulties and responsibilities involved in interpreting events of the past. This book shows, in myriad ways, that history is more than riffling through old papers.

McGill University AUDREY KOBAYASHI

North to Alaska! Fifty Years on the World's Most Remarkable Highway, by Ken Coates. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991. 304 pp. Illus., maps. $34.95 cloth.

On 20 November 1942, a formal ribbon-cutting ceremony took place at Soldier's Summit above Kluane Lake, Yukon Territory. The thermometer showed −30° F when, under a thin winter sun, Alaska's acting governor, E. L. "Bob" Bartlett, representing the United States, and Ian Mackenzie, representing Canada, each held one blade of a pair of gold scissors and cut the red, white, and blue silk ribbon which officially opened the Alcan Highway (Alaska-Canada Military Highway) to military traffic. Shortly thereafter, the first truck convoy, dubbed the "Fairbanks Freight," rolled north to that city.

This was the culmination of a hectic construction season which began when President Franklin D. Roosevelt approved a recommendation by his Secretaries of the Army and Navy and the Department of the Interior to build a highway linking already established military airfields along the route. It also would provide an alternative supply route to Alaska supplementing sea and air transportation.

Work started on a pioneer road from Dawson Creek, B.C. to Big Delta, Alaska. The U.S. Army Engineers were in charge of building the pioneer road, while the Public Roads Administration (PRA) simultaneously constructed a permanent finished highway. An intergovernmental agreement determined the general location of the highway which would connect American railroads in the Chicago area to the Canadian highway and railroad systems. These, in turn, would reach the southern end of the Alcan Highway.

Seven engineering regiments, aided by forty-seven contractors employed by the PRA, worked toward each other from various points along the route. They laboured under often harsh weather conditions and over extremely difficult terrain, yet finished the pioneer road nine months and six days after the start of construction.

The initial agreement between the U.S. Army Engineers and the PRA in April 1942 had called for a two-lane highway equalling standards for

contiguous U.S. park and mountain roads, including a thirty-six-foot-wide roadbed, finished with 118 inches of gravel or crushed rock, and a 2-inch bituminous surface was to control dust. Bridges were to be timber trestle construction capable of carrying thirty tons, while future plans called for twenty-four-foot-wide steel bridges carrying forty tons.

With the threat of a Japanese invasion receding in 1943, the pressure to rapidly complete the highway was gone. The road was to be cheaper than originally planned, with a roadbed of only twenty-six feet, with surfacing material placed on the road to a width of twenty to twenty-two feet, and no bituminous top. New bridges were to be two-lane and could not exceed twenty-four feet in width. The permanent road was to be completed by December 31, 1943.

In short, the construction of the Alcan Highway represented a gigantic effort. Strung out along 1,470 miles, the engineers and contractors built 133 bridges and installed an average of six culverts per mile for a total of 8,000. The War Department spent $19,744,585 for the pioneer road of which $9,547,826 paid for troop supplies, $489,213 went for the Gulkana-Slana cut-off, $1,254,211 for temporary bridges, and only $8,453,335 for the actual construction. By 1945, the PRA had spent a total of $123,093,443 for the 1,470-mile Alcan Highway, at an average cost of $83,312 per mile. In April 1946, Royal Canadian Army officials took over the main stretch of the Alaska Highway, as it now was called, the 1,220 or so miles from Dawson Creek to the Alaska border.

Author Ken Coates, vice-president of the University of Northern British Columbia, is eminently qualified to write the story of the Alaska Highway, in part because his own life was so tied up with it. In 1964, his father Richard K. Coates, a civil engineer, transferred from Revelstoke, B.C. to Whitehorse, Y.T. to work for the Department of Public Works on the reconstruction of the Alaska Highway. At age seven, Ken Coates moved to Whitehorse where he went to school. He worked along the Yukon portions of the highway for three summers following high school. In 1974, his father was transferred, over his protest, to the Vancouver office of Public Works Canada, and Ken Coates worked his last summer on the highway in 1975. His fascination with the north, however, has continued to this day.

The volume is based on Canadian and American federal archives, newspapers, secondary accounts as well as memoirs of participants. The volume contains seven chapters. In the first, the author acquaints the reader with the various schemes before 1942 to connect the northwest with the rest of the country. In fact, these went back to the late nineteenth century to the Klondike Gold Rush. By the 1920s, planners considered two alternatives:

Route A running just east of the Alaska Panhandle and passing through the coastal mountain ranges; and Route B which ran roughly north from Prince George, B.C. to Dawson City, Y.T. and from there on to Alaska. Finally, Edmonton, Alberta led a lobbying effort demanding that any road to Alaska pass through the northern plains. The U.S. Army built along this Route C.

In what must be typically Canadian paranoia about American intentions he calls his second chapter "The Invasion of the North." There were no American intentions to grab the Canadian northwest, in fact, the American executive and legislative branches had not figured out what to do with Alaska, America's subarctic subcontinent.

Coates deftly treats the unstable and seasonal white society of the northwest and the stable Native population in the pre-1942 days. The war and the associated construction forever changed both of these societies. The reminiscences of individuals, both male and female, who worked on the highway lend colour and enliven the author's narrative. And while construction work offered opportunities to the Natives, the arrival of so many troops and civilian workers also brought disease and disrupted long-established lifestyles. In short, the construction of the Alaska Highway ranks as one of the engineering feats of the twentieth century. It also changed the Northwest forever. Chapter 4 tells of the efforts of the U.S. Army Engineers, while Chapter 5 tells the story of the PRA construction labours. Chapter 6 deals with the transfer of the Alaska Highway to Canada and the maintenance problems, while the last chapter brings the story to the present.

Coates is a good story teller; the narrative flows smoothly and holds the reader's attention. The volume is illustrated with 101 black-and-white photographs, some of which appear to be poorly reproduced, as well as an excellent map. This reviewer has a few criticisms of an otherwise excellent volume and a significant contribution to northern history. The author has a habit of using the passive tense and of featuring individuals who are not introduced to the reader. A few examples will suffice. Harry George appears on p. 110 and is identified on p. 199. We never find out who F. Rainey is (p. 110), Mildred Spence (p. 121), Rusty Johnson (p. 105), or Bob E. Bartlett (p. 132). Why does it surprise the author that Alaska authorities were reluctant to change the territory's hunting regulations to accommodate the troops (p. 123), and combined American and Canadian forces defeated the Japanese only on Attu, while the enemy successfully evacuated Kiska. And while the official notes of July 19, 1943 stated that the Alaska

Highway began at Dawson Creek and ended at Fairbanks, it never went beyond Big Delta, because from there the Richardson Highway, begun in 1905, connected Fairbanks (p. 149).

University of Alaska Fairbanks CLAUS-M. NASKE

Salmon Canneries: British Columbia North Coast, by Gladys Young Blyth. Lantzville: Oolichan Books, 1991. 180 pp. Illus. $19.95 paper.

There is only one way of summarizing this local history of the salmon canneries that were so central a feature of the Naas and Skeena River systems: a labour of love. Gladys Young Blyth grew up in Bella Coola and worked at Namu Cannery. For many years Namu was the largest cannery on the central coast. In 1940 Gladys met her husband, and they moved to Prince Rupert, where her involvement with the canning industry continued. I had an opportunity to travel to the north coast in the late spring of 1982 as part of the Fish and Ships Research Project sponsored by the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at The University of British Columbia. Gladys gave us a tour of the North Pacific Cannery Village Museum located in nearby Port Edwards. As curator of the museum, her love of the industry was evident in the breadth of her knowledge and in the care she took in collecting and displaying artefacts connected with the fishing industry.

What comes through in *Salmon Canneries: British Columbia North Coast* is the vibrancy of the industry beginning with the construction of the first salmon cannery north of the Fraser River in the late 1870s and named Inverness (Alexander Ewen is credited with having built, in 1870, the first salmon cannery in British Columbia: Annieville on the Fraser River). Gladys provides a profile of thirty-eight canneries, including dates of construction and operation; owners; where available, survey maps that illustrate the layout of the buildings; and a wealth of photographs culled from archives throughout the province. The growth of the industry hinged on being able to build a cannery on a site where salmon came to spawn in great numbers. This was especially important in the years before gas-powered engines made the fishing fleet more mobile. It was also important in the years before refrigeration techniques could be developed to preserve the catches. The height of the salmon runs corresponded with the warmest days of summer and thus the fish spoiled quickly unless it was processed immediately. The technique of canning proved especially effective and

lucrative, since a cannery could be built at relatively low cost immediately adjacent to the spawning grounds. The biggest concern was having fresh water available to clean the catches and for human consumption. In addition, sawmills provided wood needed for construction of buildings and for the crates needed to pack the cans of salmon which were then loaded on to steamers to be shipped south. In this way, salmon canning created both direct and indirect employment and spawned its own seasonal communities all along the major river systems.

The importance of these canneries in providing aboriginal peoples living on the northwest coast with employment is evident in the rows of housing marked "Indian Huts" on the 1923 survey maps. Most maps also indicate separate lodgings for Japanese fishermen and Chinese cannery workers, each group having its own "bunkhouse." The photographs graphically illustrate this diversity in ethnic background and also depict the segregated nature of the employment practices of cannery owners and managers, each group working together on its own in predetermined tasks and separated from others by the imposed social constructions of race and gender.

All of this changed when technological developments allowed the fishing fleet to travel over greater distances and to preserve catches in refrigerated holding tanks. In addition, mechanization of canning lines allowed greater efficiency in processing but at higher costs in the infrastructure. The result was consolidation of processing and closure of outlying plants which in turn led to the loss of a major source of employment to numerous Indian villages which had come to include the canneries as part of their seasonal migration. Of the original thirty-eight plants, Gladys indicates that only three were still operating in 1989: New Oceanside, the Prince Rupert Fishermen's Co-operative, and Babcock Fisheries Cannery, all located in the city of Prince Rupert. Many of the canneries listed and described in *Salmon Canneries: British Columbia North Coast* have been completely dismantled. Gladys also notes that there are 223 known and documented sites. But all that is left of most of them are artefacts taken from the canneries, photographs, survey maps, and people's memories. Nevertheless, the North Pacific Cannery, located on the north shore of Inverness Passage, has been designated a site of national historic and architectural importance by the Historic Sites and Monument Board of Canada.

For those who have an interest in the fishing industry of British Columbia, this book will be a welcome addition to their libraries. Because it is printed by Oolichan Books between soft covers, it is inexpensive. Here, in one book, readers will discover a variety of interesting facts and a wealth

of photographs, including pictures of the labels and trademarks of the various canneries. For those whose knowledge of the industry is slight, this little book might just get them hooked!

University of Waterloo ALICJA MUSZYNSKI

The Dunsmuir Saga, by Terry Reksten. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991. x, 290 pp. Illus. $29.95 cloth.

Although Terry Reksten refers to the widespread image of Robert Dunsmuir as "King Grab" and recognizes why he and his son, James, were such unpopular employers and politicians, she is less concerned with public images and issues than with the internal dynamics of a troubled family. Indeed, the book could have been titled: "Three Generations: Making and Dissipating a Fortune."

Drawing on his knowledge as an experienced coal miner, the Scottish-born Robert Dunsmuir "discovered" the Wellington mine in 1869. A talented entrepreneur, over the next few years he developed the mine and a San Francisco market for its high quality coal. When he died unexpectedly in 1889, he was a provincial cabinet minister, the chief collier of Vancouver Island, and a major investor in such ventures as the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway, the Albion Iron Works, and the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company. He left a fortune of approximately $15 million.

His middle-aged sons James and Alexander had only modest positions in their father's businesses. Reksten suggests Robert had good reason for limiting their responsibilities. The brighter son, Alex, was an alcoholic; the "stolidly obedient" (p. 33) James was a "simple-minded man" with modest ambitions (p. 156). Indeed, in 1900, when he was the province's leading industrialist, James was surprised to be accused of conflict of interest when he accepted the premiership of British Columbia.

Robert had left his entire fortune to his widow, Joan. Only after much badgering did she transfer parts of the Dunsmuir corporate empire to her sons; a dispute over the price of the Wellington Colliery permanently estranged her from James. Family relations were further complicated when Alex died in 1900, forty days after marrying his long-time mistress. With the exception of an annuity for his widow, who died little more than a year later, Alex left his entire estate to James. Subsequently, Alex's step-daughter, a New York actress, and Joan Dunsmuir sued for a share of the estate. A succession of courts ruled in James's favour; Joan died before she could launch a final appeal and the step-daughter ran out of money. The legal bills had been over a million dollars.

Although Reksten admits that the lack of documentation makes her "a shadowy figure" (p. 112), Joan may be the most interesting of the Dunsmuirs. She was noted for her business acumen and was as stubborn as any Dunsmuir in dealing with miners' unions. But, as a wealthy widow her main interest was "acquiring for her daughters the best husbands Dunsmuir dollars could buy" (p. 119). Some of the older girls had made reasonable matches locally before their father became so wealthy. The younger girls were less fortunate; one married into the peerage, but the best entry for most of them to British society was through marriage to impecunious military officers. No marriage seems to have been very happy. The younger daughters spent wildly and invested unwisely. Several died in impoverished circumstances. Like their aunts, most of the eight daughters of James showed an uncanny ability to choose poor husbands and to live extravagantly. English and European country houses, extended visits to Monte Carlo, a Parisian fashion house, Hollywood, and Tallulah Bankhead are part of their story. One brother was little better. Robin, the eldest son, was of the same mold as his uncle Alex; he lacked discipline and loved alcohol. James Jr., better known as "Boy," was stolid like his father but died in the sinking of the *Lusitania* when he was only twenty-one.

Reksten scoured the archives for Dunsmuir material, interviewed some who knew the younger Dunsmuirs, and found some telling pictures. The book incidentally throws some light on the corporate and political side of the Dunsmuirs, but it is not an analysis of their industrial empire or of provincial politics. *The Dunsmuir Saga* is a lively account that will appeal especially to those who enjoy reading about the high living of the *nouveau riche*. Reksten does not explicitly say so, but the book has a moral: money cannot buy happiness. One would be as sorry for the Dunsmuirs as for their coal miners were it not that they were largely responsible for their own misfortunes.

University of Victoria PATRICIA E. ROY

The Forbidden City Within Victoria, by David Chuenyan Lai. Victoria: Orca Book Publishers, 1991. xiii, 191 pp. Illus., photos, maps. $12.95 paper.

David Chuenyan Lai's name is well known to the readers of this journal and to anyone with an analytical interest in the Chinatowns of North American cities. His *Chinatowns: Towns Within Cities in Canada* (1988) is the best known and broadest in scope of his several writings. He is also

known as the ultimate authority on Victoria's Chinatown and, in his non-academic mode, an activist who has had much to do with its rehabilitation.

The Forbidden City is a popular piece. It addresses non-specialist and non-Chinese readers who are curious about Victoria's Chinatown. Lai assumes most non-Chinese readers harbour a sense of mystery about Chinatown — an assumption not necessarily always valid for those under the age of forty. The author's attitude is friendly and reassuring: mysteries can be explained. Some are creations of popular imagination and lore; others exist but with a different meaning than what readers might presume.

More than anything, this is the book to take on a walking tour of Victoria's Chinatown — almost like having the expert himself with you. But in this case, the expert's footnotes are there, drawn from the archives of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA), the City Archives and real estate records. Thus, one learns about sites and buildings and acquires miscellaneous information by browsing through this volume.

Besides its value as a guidebook, this informal, popular work has its reference value. The bibliography and footnotes are informative, and the appendices conveniently lay out what is known about the Chinese hospital, public school, and cemetery. Over 100 photos and drawings add documentation and interest.

University of British Columbia EDGAR WICKBERG