

*"A Whole Little City by Itself":  
Tranquille and Tuberculosis*

Wayne Norton

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**T**HIS POPULAR STUDY of the Tranquille Sanatorium near Kamloops, British Columbia (1907-58), helps commemorate the centennial of the Canadian Lung Association (2000). Wayne Norton has produced a clearly written text that sets forth the key dates, personalities, and issues in the decision to locate one of Canada's leading centres for tubercular patients in British Columbia's dry belt. Beginning with a brief survey of the history of the disease and its treatment, he moves quickly to introduce nineteenth-century Canadian public health responses, notably the sanitarium movement, and from there to discuss the debates surrounding the choice of the Kamloops site. While initially uneasy about a source of possible contagion, the residents of the Interior soon appreciated the economic advantages of having a major provincial institution close at hand. Even with local support, however, Tranquille had trouble

keeping afloat. The heroic efforts of the BC Anti-Tuberculosis Society eventually gave way to provincial ownership after the First World War. Private philanthropy continued to meet a variety of shortfalls until the "San" was eventually closed when services to tubercular patients were concentrated in Vancouver in 1958. Short, lively chapters and a fascinating collection of photos introduce continuing problems of construction, food, and finance as well as the machinations and sacrifices of doctors and politicians. The patients and the workforce emerge less clearly, but they, too, are briefly described, notably the military clients after the Great War and the hard-pressed nurses. In short, Wayne Norton has provided a useful introduction to an important institution. Anyone interested in the medical history of British Columbia, not to mention the politics of institutional location, will find it valuable to consult *A Whole Little City by Itself*.