

privileging continental geography over political history. How does this reorientation serve the text? At a time when many novelists who sought economic success in the United States refrained from specifying their settings as Canadian (e.g., no geographical identifications appear in Sinclair Ross's *As For Me and My House* [1941] and very few appear in the urban stories of Morley Callaghan), Haig-Brown wrote passionately specific fiction about Vancouver Island, which he overtly names, just as he does Vancouver, the Prairie provinces, and Nijmegen as Colin passes through these places during the Depression and the Second World War. Haig-Brown's use of "mythical map names" (p. xix) applies only to Vancouver Island sites, in part to deter local readers from treating fiction as history or autobiography.

As an "accumulation of unfinished narratives" (p. xiv), to use Ricou's apt phrase, *On the Highest Hill* shares the ethos of many Canadian novels of its era, including most of those mentioned in this review. Like these books, Haig-Brown's is of interest today as much for its efforts as for its accomplishments. Its hero symbolizes the individual's alienation from the increasing complexity of the modern age. Caught in the transition from handlogging to industrial processing (and its accompanying union politics), in the upheavals of the Depression, and in his own social and sexual uncertainty, Colin retreats far into his beloved mountains, his superb wilderness skills ironically contributing to his eventual self-destruction. The book's "first-stage regionalism" (p. xxiv) mediates between the semi-fiction of Grainger's *Woodsmen of the West* (1908) and the complex layering of Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* (1988). The next time I have an opportunity to teach a course on BC literature, this is where I would like to place this book, grateful to Laurie Ricou and the Oregon State University Press for making it available in a handsome, affordable edition.

Simon Fraser University

CAROLE GERSON

A Dedicated Team: Klohn Leonoff Consulting Engineers, 1951-1991, by Cyril E. Leonoff. Richmond: Bi-Tech Publishers, 1994. viii, 252 pp. Photos. \$49.95 cloth.

Of all the materials used by the civil engineer, the most common is earth. Dams and highways are built of it, industrial plants and tall buildings are founded on it, and, occasionally, structures are destroyed

by it when it subsides or slides downhill. It is also the most variable and complex of engineering materials. In spite of this, its properties were not analyzed and tested scientifically until the 1920s, so recently that the principals in the Klohn Leonoff firm — and, incidentally, also this reviewer — personally knew Karl Terzaghi, who named and founded the science of soil mechanics when his *Erdbaumechanik* was published in 1925. The founder of the Klohn Leonoff firm, Charles Ripley, did postgraduate work with Terzaghi at Harvard.

The science of soil mechanics is so recent that Leonoff is able to give a history of its inception and development and of its main protagonists in Europe, the United States, and Canada. Leonoff does this through personal knowledge, without resorting to technicalities. In Canada, the science of soil mechanics got its start on the Prairies, in whose universities Ripley, his associates Earle Klohn and Cyril Leonoff, and many of the early employees of the firm were educated. The reader can rely on the accuracy of the historical material in this book, and, indeed, nothing in the description of events or people in *A Dedicated Team* is inconsistent with this reviewer's recollection.

After the Second World War, British Columbia entered an era of rapid economic expansion, with new industries, hydro-electric plants, and highway construction all requiring the services of engineers. It was that boom which brought Charlie Ripley from Saskatchewan to Vancouver in 1951 to establish the first consulting firm in Canada to specialize in soils. The book traces the history of the firm, and the professional and geographical expansion of the field of soil mechanics, to 1991. It does not omit the false starts and the unsuccessful ventures that were experienced, and it tells us more than we need to know about a property dispute between Ripley and his brother, and about the circumstances that later led to the former's departure (along with his name) from the firm. The separation was amicable, and the author has dedicated his book to Ripley's wife.

In describing the many and varied projects of the firm, Leonoff has made extensive use of interviews with, and memoirs written by, the people who were directly involved. This gives an immediacy to the text but leads to some personal reminiscences that have little to do with the subject of the book. There are also numerous family histories. We are told that the family of one employee settled in New Brunswick in the mid-nineteenth century and that his grandmother rode to school on a horse. For the reader outside the corporate family, the book includes too many family histories, some of which go back even farther than the mid-nineteenth century.

The author was faced with the problem of narrating highly technical matters without losing the reader along the way. He took editing advice with regard to "lucidity" and has included a glossary of those technical terms that cannot be avoided. Still, some of the definitions will probably be of little help to the layperson. To do better is probably not possible, but readers without some knowledge of engineering or geoscience will have to be patient and to be willing to look up various references.

As a corporate history, *A Dedicated Team* differs from most such works. It was written by a principal of the firm, a man who has other published books to his credit. He has been as objective as possible, but he has included too many of the minutiae of the business and professional practices of Kohn Leonoff for an audience other than employees, clients, and geoscientists.

Vancouver

JOHN KENDRICK

Pilgrims in Lotus Land: Conservative Protestantism in British Columbia, 1917-1981, by Robert K. Burkinshaw. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995. 353 pp. \$44.95 cloth.

Beyond the encounter between First Nations peoples and Christian missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the impact of religion on the social and political life of British Columbia has largely been ignored by the province's historians. In *Pilgrims in Lotus Land*, Robert Burkinshaw begins to fill a large void in the historiography by examining the place of religion in an increasingly urban, multicultural, and secular society. Beginning with the evangelistic campaigns of French E. Oliver in 1917, Burkinshaw analyzes the growth of conservative Protestantism from a small group of evangelicals disillusioned with the increasing liberalism of the established mainline denominations to its current position as the religion of the "worshipping majority" among British Columbia's Protestants.

Burkinshaw's offers a multi-causal explanation of the success of conservative Protestantism in British Columbia that is sensitive to the socio-economic forces that have shaped the province. He argues that an active commitment to church planting and a lack of institutional restraints allowed conservative denominations to respond to the demographic changes that accompanied development and immigra-