

Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The varied routes by which the early settlers reached Surrey from their home lands reveal a great diversity in experience. A few came directly but many spent some time in the United States or in eastern Canada, chiefly Ontario.

Since Mr. Whiteside makes no pretense of presenting a scholarly study or academic analysis, he does not tell us if he has attempted to compile a comprehensive list of Surrey's pioneers or has merely included those whose family photographs have survived. Thus the book is of little value to serious students of British Columbia history but it will appeal to its intended audience, the children and grandchildren of Surrey's pioneers.

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*Vancouver Ltd.*, by Donald Gutstein. Toronto: James Lorimer, 1975. Pp. 192; illus.; \$5.95.

Have you ever wondered what Vancouver's most important marriages were? Or why Clark Bentall lives in a house and works in an office building? Or whether or not you're one of the real people? Or how to tell the good guys from the bad guys? Donald Gutstein gives his answers to these and other questions in *Vancouver Ltd.*, James Lorimer & Company's \$5.95 contribution to urban scholarship.

*Vancouver Ltd.* tells us little of the city. It tells us plenty about Gutstein. He is guilty of ignoring the facts, of shoddy research, and of flights of dogmatic fancy. *Gutstein's Limitations* would perhaps have been a more accurate title.

As it stands, the book is a single-minded, self-centred bit of flim-flam in which Gutstein, using the royal "we", sets himself up as the arbitrator of tastes and the judge of all deeds that have shaped this city. If, as judge, Gutstein had presented a more balanced discussion of the city's development over the years, it might have been a worthwhile venture for both reader and writer alike.

Gutstein starts with the past and works his way into the present. He decries the opening up of provincial lands in the 1880s as "the most reckless give-away". He points out that "the CPR continued to clear land, grade the streets, and sell the lots". And one CPR employee had the gall to dream that Vancouver was "destined to become a great city in Canada". Gutstein is a proponent of the conspiracy theory of life and to him these are dastardly plots twisted to show that even from the begin-

ning “promoter and speculators” ruled the roost. Imagine, clearing the land so people could come to settle and live here.

Gutstein is stuck in a time frame which warps his observations, and therefore *Vancouver Ltd.* doesn't give us any insights into the past. He can't grasp the fact that once the railway was welcome. He can't grasp the fact that in the beginning people wanted the city to grow and develop. He can't grasp the fact that different times breed different attitudes. As a result, his comments on the Founding Fathers, the railway and the first settlers show a condescending arrogance and gnawing disgust. It is unenlightened history because Gutstein has taken neither the time nor made the effort to reach an understanding of the era.

*Vancouver Ltd.* is a book aimed at the present and if anything is to be gained from reading it, it would have to be in Gutstein's analysis of contemporary events. My frustration in this regard is that Gutstein probably does have something to offer. He does have a different perspective. Unfortunately, he articulates his confusion and not much more.

His confusion is most pronounced when he talks about the “people”. Who are these “people”? The simplest definition is that they are the people that agree with the author at any given time. Depending on the chapter you read, it's implied that you are not “one of the people” if you own a house. You are not “one of the people” if you want to slow down growth, nor are you “one of the people” if you want to speed it up. You are not “one of the people” if you want to build housing, nor are you “one of the people” if you want to demolish it. You're not “one of the people” if you like too much open space, but neither are you “one of the people” if you like too little. In Gutstein's book, it's darn tough to be a “people”.

Although Gutstein supposedly supports the people's involvement in decision-making, he condemns city council for deviously submitting the Harbour Park question to plebiscite. His concern at this approach is transparent. Few with his biases advocate a systematized process for reaching as many people as possible. The more you reach, the more chance there is some won't agree with you. The majority of the people of Vancouver didn't agree with Gutstein's assessment of the Harbour Park question. Gutstein explains the disparity between his view and the people's by saying: “the people were confused enough by the TEAM rhetoric to settle for buying the first block”. What Gutstein really is saying is, isn't it too bad that all of the people aren't as smart as me? If people don't agree with Gutstein, then Gutstein says they've been bought off, they've been manipulated or they just don't understand.

Gutstein's political comments fall prey to the same distortion. One example should serve to lay to rest any claim that his observations of council in action are in any way valid. If an alderman disagrees with Gutstein's assessment, then Gutstein implies he doesn't care about people.

One of the votes used for Gutstein's assessment of aldermanic leanings typifies the problems he has with objectivity. An alderman had to vote against "allowing the Canadian Legion to change its funding arrangements with the CMHC, so that it could go ahead with a highrise for senior citizens over the objections of the residents of the area" to be one of Gutstein's good guys. To make it in Gutstein's good book, an alderman had to vote against a senior citizens' non-profit housing project which the city had initially encouraged. Gutstein's justification for this position is simply that "residents of the area would be unhappy because a highrise would block the view". This ignores the fact that short, fat buildings often block more view than tall, skinny ones. After council forced the Canadian Legion to re-design the building, it blocked not only more view but the street as well.

The highrise is used by Gutstein as a symbol of all that's bad. He neglects the fact that some people like living in highrises. They provide security and supply views. In fact, CMHC's *Beyond Shelter* suggests that these features make highrise designs very attractive to many senior citizens. In this case, however, Gutstein doesn't care about those senior citizens who are to be supplied with housing. He cares about the "residents of the area". Gutstein sets himself up as their spokesman. But is he really a spokesman for the "residents of the area"? After council decided to force a change in the design, a letter was received asking if council understood the new plan was going to "cut off light and air from two apartment blocks". The residents immediately affected by the building said "the only thing the highrise would have done was to provide a peg for the activists to hang a protest on. Can't you do something about this injustice? Surely the quality of our life does not have to be ruined because of a few activists' protests, does it?" Gutstein decided to ignore those most affected by the development, its next-door neighbours. He ignores them because they disagree.

The analysis of the False Creek agreement between the city and Marathon Realty highlights another of Gutstein's major problems: he refuses to be confused by the facts. According to Gutstein: "The city gave the green light for the CPR to proceed with its massive development, and to pocket the windfall profits picked up by the rezoning of the land. . . ." He claims the CPR made "a net gain of \$23,460,000" while the city received

a measly "\$12.75 million" in return. In summary: "City Council, again abdicating its responsibility to the electorate, has aided and abetted the CPR at every turn, giving the smooth CPR negotiators everything they ask for, and on occasion, even more than they wanted."

A brief look at the facts, all of which were available to Gutstein, suggests a different interpretation of how the negotiations went. A subdivision of the sort Marathon proposed would normally require a \$10.5 million outlay for things like parks and utilities. In addition to standard subdivision costs, however, it was agreed that Marathon would supply \$12.5 million worth of additional parkland; \$1.5 million for school purposes; \$1.25 million towards construction of a community centre with daycare, swimming, and other appropriate facilities (that figure is in 1974 dollars and escalates in line with inflation building costs); \$3.5 million for the development of public open space (again that amount escalates with inflationary costs); \$2 million extra for the construction of a high-quality public seawall; and \$0.5 million for a perimeter road. This comes to a total of \$21,500,000 additional expense for Marathon Realty and a total cost of \$31,750,000.

In summary, in return for the city's actions which, if we accept Gutstein's figures, added \$23,460,000 in value to the Marathon land, the people of Vancouver received added benefits amounting to about \$31,750,000. Gutstein prefers to ignore this because he's trying to show that city councils give the people of Vancouver's assets away. The negotiations surrounding the north side of False Creek, in fact, show a council securing and improving the city's assets for everyone's benefit.

The real problem with *Vancouver Ltd.* is that anyone who knows anything about the city knows that Gutstein doesn't know much. He is an apprentice of the famed "excreta tauros sensos frustratur" (bullshit baffles brains) school of journalism. *Vancouver Ltd.* is the result of his apprenticeship.

*Vancouver*

GORDON CAMPBELL

*Fishing; British Columbia's Commercial Fishing History*, by Joseph E. Forester and Anne D. Forester. Saanichton: Hancock House Publishers, Ltd., 1975. Pp. 224; \$14.95.

With the publication of *Fishing* there is, at last, a book about British Columbia's fisheries which is worth buying. All facets of the industry from