

alienating not only absentee and foreign management but also absentee and foreign union leadership. The direction of the company may be out of their control, but winning back the local union can restore at least some measure of influence over their work environment.

It is one of the strengths of Hodgson's work that his richly textured study of a major Kootenay political leader opens up such questions. Another half dozen similar books on politicians in the B.C. Interior — say, on Harry Perry in Prince George, Ed Kenny in Terrace, Tom Uphill in Fernie, and not forgetting W. A. C. Bennett in Kelowna — would help us begin to analyse the character of regional political differences within British Columbia.

University of British Columbia

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John Veillette and Gary White, *Early Indian Village Churches: Wooden Frontier Architecture in British Columbia* (University of British Columbia Press, 1977) pp. xx + 195, illustrated, cloth \$25.00, paper \$19.00.

The current enthusiasm for all things Canadian has not necessarily produced the best results. Untalented amateurs have frequently undertaken projects very much beyond their capabilities or professional knowledge. However, despite this caveat, excellence does sometimes ensue and this present volume is a first-rate example of what can be done by persons of taste, sensibility and verve. In the domain of history of architecture neither John Veillette nor Gary White can be considered amateurs but neither are they professionals. Rather they have that rare quality of perceptivity which cannot be taught but at the same time is not unlearned and this has enabled them to produce a handsome and attractive book, one that seeks to portray the consequences of Christianity and the Indian people in a form that is visible in its architectural remains.

A volume that is essentially pictorial poses problems because it is not easy to ascertain whether it should be considered as a work of art or of scholarship. Certainly, in this instance, one has no difficulty in praising the high calibre of the illustrations. Many of the photographs were taken by Messrs. Veillette and White who use their camera not only to be able to portray the actual buildings that are still extant but at the same time, they manage to evoke a mood or *ambiance* which is quite unique. Those photographs that they have selected from other sources are generally of an equally high standard.

Ecclesiastical buildings in British Columbia — both those which survive

and those which are lost — are infinitely varied. There is really no set external design for any denomination; it is only in the interior arrangements that Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, for example, vary considerably. A Salvation Army hostel is perhaps the most unusual survivor of a more varied external style, being rather more highly decorated than is customary. What is quite astonishing is the elaboration of detail that is possible in what are or were essentially simple buildings. Relatively unskilled carpenters “rang the changes” with simple fretworks, shingles, tongue and groove and the like, often with the happiest of results. The interior furnishings are frequently less interesting although some of the Roman Catholic edifices are quite sophisticated, for example the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Sugar Cove. What is amazing, especially in this age of conservation, is how many of these early buildings are almost totally neglected — probably they have become redundant through population shifts and changes in social moves — and the semi-derelict structures — the Holy Cross Church at Pinchi would serve as a good illustration. There are poignant reminders of the hopes of an earlier age. A goodly number of early wooden churches were destroyed by fire and not all were re-erected.

The captions accompanying the illustrations are well written and informative. Enough text is provided to answer most queries, certainly those of a non-professional architectural historian, but at the same time the principal focus is on the pictorial. The two brief essays by Robin Fisher and Warren Sommer — the former writes on the role of the missionaries and the Indian people, the latter on the more technical aspects, church architecture and building methods — set the pictures in a proper context. The two essays have very real connections in that they illustrate the optimism of the early clerical figures both in their aims and in their contributions. The third essay by Messrs. Veillette and White themselves is a sort of recapitulation of their own sentiments on the contemporary scene. The semi-idyllic past is gone, the innocence has departed but the historical impact of the church in its communal setting still cannot be ignored. “Perhaps as they put the last century into historical perspective and decide what they choose to accept and what was forced upon them, the Indian people of British Columbia may decide that their churches are, after all, an important — though adopted — aspect of their culture.”

In conclusion the University of British Columbia is to be complimented not only for having the imagination to publish this book but for the handsome appearance of the format and the elegance of the printing and illustrations.

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