

*Old Trails and New Directions: Papers of the Third North American Fur Trade Conference*, edited by Carol M. Judd and Arthur J. Ray. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.

The Third North American Fur Trade Conference met in Winnipeg in May 1978 under the Advisory Chairmanship of the late Professor W. L. Morton. The Foreword to this volume declares that the conference was a success thanks to careful "choice of topics and speakers," but the choices were not all equally fortunate.

The best of the nineteen papers are indeed good, most notably Irene Spry's first-rate study of "Innis, the Fur Trade and Modern Economic Problems" and Sylvia van Kirk's on "Fur Trade Social History: Some Recent Trends." In her essay on "The Iroquois and the Fur Trade in Western Canada" Trudy Nicks also handles an interesting subject well. Richard Ruggles' "Hudson's Bay Company Mapping" is another readable paper containing useful new material, as are Arthur J. Ray's "Indians as Consumers in the Eighteenth Century" and John Nicks' study of "Orkneymen in the H.B.C." James Gibson writes interestingly on "The Russian Fur Trade," though he makes some surprising mis-statements on Alaska's most important fur-bearer, the sea otter — for neither the Northern sub-species (*Enhydra l. lutris*) nor the Southern (*E. l. nereis*) has ever been exterminated, and it was the latter, not the former, which was once believed to be lost. To these welcome contributions one must add the final summary with which Professor G. Williams ended the conference — a notable tour de force.

So far, so good; but, as observed above, other choices of both subject and author were less successful. Thus it is no criticism of the way either Cornelius Jaenen or Calvin Martin handled their chosen topics to say that the papers they read to this fur trade conference (on, respectively, "French Attitudes toward Native Society" and "Sub-arctic Indians and Wildlife") add nothing to our knowledge of the fur trade.

But worse criticisms than this have to be made; and it was unpleasant to find that far from naïve man, the late and much regretted Professor E. E. Rich, accused in Miss Morantz's paper (on "The Fur Trade and the Cree of James Bay") of displaying "either pure ethno-centrism or a great deal of naïveté" because he wrote that tribes "became utterly dependent on regular European supplies. The bow and arrow went out of use, and the Indian starved if he did not own a serviceable gun, powder and shot." It was also interesting for this reviewer to find him-

self included in that accusation for having written that, as new trade goods came in, old native skills died out.

As for the Indians' loss of old skills, I confess I still believe that, after his score or so of years by Hudson Bay, Andrew Graham did know what he was talking about when he reported that "the utensils of these people are much fewer" than they had been before the traders provided European goods to replace what natives had once made for themselves. For Graham was a collector of Indian artifacts, and it would be interesting to hear the evidence for rejecting the conclusions to which his statement points — *e.g.* how far did Indians continue, after they began to get European goods, to practise the skill required to make fire without burning glasses or firesteels, or that of fashioning knives, spearheads and axes out of stone once traders had made iron implements available? From her attack on Rich, one also cannot believe Miss Morantz to be familiar with Hearne's observation that, though his Chippewyan companions could use the bow for slaughtering caribou at close quarters after driving them into a sort of corral, they had "so far lost the art of shooting with bows and arrows that I never knew any . . . who could take these weapons only and kill either deer, moose or buffalo in the common . . . method of hunting." On the subject of how far the Crees depended on European weapons for their food, she seems equally unfamiliar with Graham's report that "frequently the breaking of a gun" caused "great distress" and sometimes even murder and cannibalism among the Indians he knew best — and there the old fur trader, speaking from long experience, makes Rich's point more forcefully than Rich made it himself. Likewise, she could hardly have said that "the Inuit" steadfastly refused "to be lured into the trade until the middle of the nineteenth century" if she knew how eagerly in the eighteenth century Inuit of the eastern Arctic had traded at sea with the Company's annual supply ships in Hudson Straits or those of the Bay's west coast with Churchill's sloops; and, wherever she found her story of an Ungava family in 1820 preferring "a birchbark cooking vessel . . . [to] a copper one," it was certainly not in "Davies ed *Letters from Hudson Bay* 57," which she cites, for that book's closing date is 1740!

A similar lack of basic information mars the paper on "Indian Maps" by Mr. Malcolm Lewis, who is described as "a historical geographer from Sheffield, England." Years ago it indeed used to be said that, as a deliberate policy, the Hudson's Bay Co. kept all knowledge of the Bay as secret as it could; but one fact which both Professor G. Williams and Richard Ruggles have laboured to make clear is that, however true this

opinion may or may not be of the earlier part of the eighteenth century, it is quite untrue of the years after Samuel Wegg, F.R.S., joined the Company's London Committee. Then its policy was one of active co-operation with the world of learning. So in 1768-69 it welcomed to Churchill two Royal Society astronomers, William Wales and Joseph Dymond, who went there to observe the transit of Venus; in the early 1770s it sent to London from all its Bayside posts massive collections of natural history specimens for the Royal Society's museum; it made Hearne's maps and journals available to the Admiralty, to Dr. John Douglas for his account of Cook's third voyage and to Thomas Pennant for his *Arctic Zoology*; and London cartographers were allowed to use Turner's, Thompson's and Fidler's maps — to name no more. But Mr. Lewis seems unaware of these facts relating to the historical geography of Canada, or he would hardly blame "the secretive policy of the company" for preventing certain Indian sketch-maps from becoming "generally known." Since he admits that they were "grossly misleading," scholarship could have lost little if they had indeed been secretly withheld from students; but they were not, and one of them — by Idotliazee and Matonabee (to use Hearne's spellings) — was actually published by Alexander Dalrymple, the eminent geographer perhaps best known to Canadians as the first serious critic of Hearne's mapping. Dalrymple found it in the Hudson's Bay Co.'s archives in London, where it lay from 1768, when Moses Norton brought it to England, until 1974, when it came to Winnipeg with the rest of the Company's records; and, since it was in London all that time, it could not have misled Hearne too far eastwards on his 1770 journey, as Mr. Lewis suggests — a suggestion made the more unfortunate by the fact that we have Hearne's own account of the geographical information with which he set out. It was a map he had drawn "on a large skin of parchment" which showed only "the West coast of the Bay" and left the rest blank for "twelve degrees of latitude north and thirty degrees of longitude west of Churchill Factory . . . to be filled up during my journey." Evidently, then, Hearne began by preparing to travel a long way west, and very properly, too, since *pace* Mr. Lewis, his boss, Governor Moses Norton, bade him go westward all the way to "the borders of the Athapuscow Indians' country"; and his futile wanderings over the eastern barrens in 1770 were due to the ignorance of the guide whom Norton had stupidly picked for no better reason than his own allegation that "he had been very near to" the Coppermine River (an assertion which really amounts to an admission that this Indian was not qualified to carry out the job he under-

took). But, if Mr. Lewis were familiar with Hearne's own story of his problems, he would hardly confuse that explorer's second journey with his first, to name another of his errors.

Grievous as these faults are, it is but fair to Miss Morantz and Mr. Lewis for readers to recall that a responsible editor would not allow contributors to expose themselves as they do in this volume. It is also fair to observe that from their footnotes these authors do appear to have done considerable work in the Company's unpublished archives, and that they are not the only contributors to this book who seem to suffer from the fault of undervaluing old published authorities after such a splendid collection of original MS documents as the Hudson's Bay Company's records has become available. Among other symptoms of this weakness, and of negligent editing, are the facts that in this book the name of that outstanding pioneer of fur trade history, Elliott Coues, editor of the journals of Alexander Henry the younger, is consistently misspelled "Cones," and that some authors are decidedly casual about giving page references for their quotations.

Finally, a serious book needs an index, but the value of this book is much damaged by the failure to provide one; and that is the more a pity because, as we have noted, some of the papers it contains are first-rate.

*Victoria*

RICHARD GLOVER

*The Salish People: The Local Contribution of Charles Hill-Tout; Volume I: The Thompson and The Okanagan; Volume II: The Squamish and The Lillooet; Volume III: The Mainland Halkomelem; Volume IV: The Sechelt and the South-Eastern Tribes of Vancouver Island*, edited with an introduction by Ralph Maud. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1978.

The ethnographic work of Charles Hill-Tout has long been familiar to specialists with access to libraries whose holdings included the professional journals and reports in which his work appeared. Now the wider public has easy access. It is an ironic but, for Hill-Tout, consistent twist of fate that some thirty years after death he stands to be more widely read than ever he was in his prime.

In 1892, at the age of 34, Hill-Tout moved to Vancouver with his young family, taking up a post as a schoolteacher. He had been headed