

Finally, I bridle just a bit at Ms. Sunahara's assertion that the secret files of government have been revealed to her alone and for the first time. Ken Adachi had every opportunity to make use of the same material (with one or two relatively minor exceptions) she saw; if he failed to use the King and Mackenzie Papers, both of which were open, or departmental files, that was only because he did not choose to do so. It does no credit to the author of a fine book to suggest that she is revealing the truth suppressed by a guilty government. The government was guilty, and this is the truth. Let the truth speak for itself.

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Within the Barbed Wire Fence, by Takeo Ujo Nakano with Leatrice Nakano. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980. Pp. 126, *illus.*

For most immigrants British Columbia has been a place for doing, for getting ahead and making a future. In such a setting change tends to be located in the environment rather than in self, and life takes on a particular materialism. "Nature" becomes "resources" and as such is bared to the arsenal of industrial technology. This has been the predominant British Columbian pattern, but not the only pattern. Some immigrants sought havens in mountain valleys, others peered mystically into the forest, and almost everyone worked out a new life here in relation to memories of home elsewhere. Thus the past enters British Columbia as nostalgia and, for some of the most sensitive among us, nature represents the best of what is new.

Takeo Ujo Nakano was one of the many who came to get ahead. As a teen-ager on his uncle's berry farm in Hammond in 1920 he dreamed of owning a large farm of his own. Later, a mill hand at Woodfibre, he dreamed of putting aside enough money so that he, his wife (whom he married in Japan in 1930) and their daughter could return comfortably to Japan. Events would take another course. After Pearl Harbor he was sent to a work camp in Yellowhead Pass. His wife and daughter went to Greenwood. Eventually he learned that he would be reunited with his family, but official plans changed and he found himself in the Slocan Valley. He and several other deeply disappointed men refused to work, and for their intransigence were sent to jail in the Immigration Building in Vancouver and from there to a prisoner-of-war camp at Angler on the north shore of Lake Superior. There he lived with hundreds of other

Japanese men behind a double barbed-wire fence and sentry towers. Most of the prisoners were *gambariya*, Japanese diehards who had sought imprisonment as an act of loyalty and defiance. Takeo Nakano was not one of them but, speaking no English and attached to his homeland, he was not a Canadian either. After fourteen months in the camp he applied for and was given a job at Canada Packers in Toronto where, before the end of the war, his wife and daughter joined him. In 1948 they became Canadian citizens.

Throughout this experience he kept a diary and wrote poetry. He particularly admired the *tanka*, a short poem of thirty-one syllables arranged in five lines, but he also wrote *haiku* (seventeen syllables in three lines) for the poetry club at Angler. Parts of his diary and subsequent recollections and a few of his poems are gathered in a short book that has been prepared with the assistance of his second daughter Leatrice, a graduate student in English at the University of Toronto.

The result, as Peter Ward points out in a helpful biographical and historical "Afterword," is the "only available, substantial account of the experiences and reflections of an Issei, or first generation immigrant from Japan." *Within the Barbed Wire Fence* is the record of a sensitive man in humiliating circumstances far from home. Essentially, he retreated into poetry and nature:

From high in the Rockies,
Overflowing boulders,
Gushing downwards,
Clear cold water
My life sustains.

Letters from his wife were lined out by the censor, but on an otherwise faceless Christmas day in Angler there were Japanese pastries at dinner. They had been sent, the prisoners were told, from Kaslo and Greenwood. Through these pages geese fly overhead, dandelions wind through barbed wire, a praying mantis is "black and lovable." The book is itself a poem, a journey into the interior. About it hangs an other-worldliness that reminds me, curiously, of Gabrielle Roy's *Rue Deschambault* because, I suppose, Catholic Christianity and Japanese art both transcend the North American mainstream. *Within the Barbed Wire Fence* is a small treasure, not only because it is a vivid view from the inside of the Japanese evacuation, but also because it deals with the overriding Canadian challenge of knowing oneself in a strange place. No wonder, as Takeo Nakano put it in a prize-winning *tanka*:

As final resting place,
 Canada is chosen.
 On citizenship paper,
 Signing
 Hand trembles.

University of British Columbia

COLE HARRIS

Bull of the Woods, The Gordon Gibson Story, by Gordon Gibson with Carol Renison. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1980. Pp. 310, \$16.95 hardcover.

Gordon Gibson, through his own words as recorded by Renison, comes through as a racist, sexist, bullying and often insensitive man. He also emerges as a tough, often courageous, sometimes high-minded and surprisingly honest entrepreneur. Perhaps because one senses that only such an individual could have run the risks he ran, built the mills he built and established the forest companies he did in the pioneer conditions of the 1920s to 1950s, one winces at the revelations but reads on.

Too much of the book is a personal diary, written as if in the first person, in which Gibson eulogizes himself. This is unfortunate because the events he brought about, the territory on which he imposed his will and the people whose lives he affected are exceedingly interesting to the reader who is concerned with British Columbia's history. Fewer precious revelations and more detailed descriptions of events would have made the book a lasting tribute to the man. He is worthy of a lasting tribute, the negative characteristics notwithstanding.

His version of the logging and fishing conditions and small mills in the 1920s, of boats, log-booms, storms and mishaps in dangerous seas through that decade and the next few, and, most particularly, of the establishment of Tahsis after the war are worth the reading.

During the war, the Gibson brothers obtained contracts to build several airports on Vancouver Island and the North Coast. Tofino, Ladysmith and Sandspit were among the projects. As well they obtained the rights to cut any spruce on Vancouver Island; hence the logging camps at Zeballos, Tahsis, Ucluelet and elsewhere. Out of these contracts and camps they built a not inconsiderable empire. It was no smooth development; there were tragedies, fires and losses, and there is little doubt that a capacity to take risks and live with the consequences was essential to their ultimate success. Tahsis was such a risk. Its success depended on