

the myth of mayoral power in Vancouver. Persky avoids this pitfall. He notes, in referring to both Mother Goose's Jack and Mayor Jack, "Not everything is exactly as it seems. For instance, there is some question whether Jack actually did build the house attributed to him. . . . Finally, there is considerable dispute over whether this structure is a real home or merely a house of cards" (p. iii).

Persky has written an engaging and effective book. Let us hope that he writes another for Vancouver in 1984.

University of British Columbia

PAUL TENNANT

A Picture History of British Columbia, by George Woodcock. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1980. Pp. 240, illus., \$18.95.

To someone who knows little of British Columbia this may be a pleasing introduction to the province's history. On the whole, Woodcock succeeds in writing a text that complements and supplements the approximately 400 illustrations that are the real *raison d'être* of this volume. It is unfortunate, however, that limitations of space within the book and the apparent absence of research and writing time prevented Woodcock from using his justly acclaimed literary talents to produce more than a very pedestrian history of British Columbia.

Woodcock's approach is basically chronological. Given his concentration on the physical development of the province and on its politics, it is appropriate that he begins with explorers and ends with comments on BCRIC and the present discontent with the federal Liberal government. Seldom does he venture into what can loosely be called social history. There is, for example, considerable attention to the organized unemployed of the 1930s but otherwise there is scant mention of labour, organized or not. Occasionally Woodcock breaks from chronology. "Recognizing the Landscape," a section on the artists who visited in the late nineteenth century, is the most successful of these; the text nicely explains why the artists came, the accompanying paintings show what they saw. "Duncan of Metlakatla and the Anglican Schism" [the Hills-Cridge affair] seems an eccentric choice to represent religion; it is virtually the only mention of religion in the volume. A third topical section, "Facing the Yellow Peril!" demonstrates some of the problems that compression causes throughout the book. Though Woodcock mentions the Vancouver riot of 1907 and agreements with Japan to limit immigration, he implies

that the Japanese only “became the target of special discrimination after Pearl Harbour [*sic*]” (p. 123). Only in a narrow technical sense is Woodcock correct for he confines his discussion to immigration regulations and ignores the whole collection of provincial laws and customs designed to restrict the activities of both Chinese and Japanese. Oversimplification and the lack of research also mar Woodcock’s political history. It is true that S. F. Tolmie was a member of a pioneer British Columbia family but surely that is not the reason why British Columbians elected him as their Premier in 1928 (p. 186).

The haste with which this volume must have been written probably explains why there is little evidence that Woodcock did any research beyond a few “standard” books on British Columbia. For instance, he repeats the story of British settlers leaving Walhachin permanently on the day the First World War was declared (p. 168), a myth effectively demolished by Nelson Riis in his 1973 *BC Studies* article. A slip of the pen no doubt explains why Rossland and Nelson have become ghost towns (p. 128). That such a slip passed uncorrected is a symptom of the coastal bias of the volume and its preoccupation with the south coastal region.

The problem of selecting illustrations for the book must have been great. British Columbia has attracted a number of excellent artists and photographers and much of their work is readily available. In many cases the choices have been superb and the brief captions are usually informative. Some of the logging scenes, a CPR construction sleigh train, and the Rossland Ladies Ice Hockey team, to cite a few, are particularly fresh and memorable. Given the wealth of photographs available it is disappointing to see, yet again, some otherwise excellent photographs that have become hackneyed with frequent use. Appealing as he is, the young lad running down a New Westminster hill to catch up with his soldier father is a tired symbol of British Columbia going to war in 1940. Even more regrettable is the use of modern photographs of old buildings that produces such incongruities as a television antenna atop Captain Ella’s home of the 1860s (p. 46) and a mini-skirted girl striding in front of Dr. Helmcken’s 1852 cottage (p. 29). The reproduction of photographs is not always as clear as possible and some of the maps have been so reduced in size that they have become decorations not guides to geographical features.

The book includes a nominal index but lacks a bibliography or list of suggested readings for those who might wish to pursue the subject further. For someone who does not want to know a great deal about

British Columbia's history and who enjoys historical photographs, without being too critical about the quality of reproduction, this is a good book.

University of Victoria

PATRICIA E. ROY

The British Columbia Parliament Buildings, edited by Martin Segger.
Vancouver: Associated Resource Consultants Ltd., 1979. \$6.95.

This book is very well conceived and reasonably well executed. Every year thousands of tourists and school children troop through the legislative precincts in Victoria, and for a great many of them, perhaps the majority, a memento of that occasion is most welcome. Rulers have always attempted to construct grand palaces which readily symbolized to their subjects the awesome power of the state. These buildings in Victoria seem a match for the grandest pretensions of provincial governments in British Columbia. That grandeur is remarkably well portrayed in this book.

Martin Segger, an art historian at the University of Victoria, has very sensibly produced a book with a popular audience in mind. In particular the introduction by Segger and Douglas Franklin, the epilogue by George Giles on the restoration program, and the appendix, "Tour of the Precinct," are all well-written pieces which provide an adequate guide to the tourist. Indeed, the last mentioned serves as a very useful aid to anyone wishing to have an organized procession through the buildings, although it might have been improved by including more details for this purpose. The long piece from the 10 February 1898 edition of the *Victoria Times* entitled, "A Marble Palace," is also well written, though perhaps a little flowery for modern tastes, and little harm would have been done the book had it been appropriately edited. No doubt Mr. Segger was grateful to have found it, since it does provide a nineteenth-century view of such an edifice.

The book is much more, however, than a mere tourist brochure. The sections on events surrounding the architectural competition and the actual construction are most informative, and would be of professional interest to historians, architects and others interested in the late nineteenth century. The one disappointment with the book — and perhaps this merely reflects the bias of a political scientist — is the cursory treatment given the political process that takes place within the handsome