

made a far more significant contribution than hitherto appreciated in the development of Canadian society. Rather, by generalizing for the whole from only a part of the phenomenon, he simply understates his case.

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British Columbia: Historical Readings, edited by W. Peter Ward and Robert A. J. McDonald. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd., 1981. Pp. xii, 692; no index.

Books of readings rarely stir the blood. They are usually printed by ambitious publishers to take advantage of a captive student market and reluctantly assigned by professors to prevent studies from ripping apart the journals in the library. Burdened by the necessity of being comprehensive, representative, balanced and packaged for tutorial use, readers tend to be overstuffed and often quite confusing. Made up for the most part from unedited academic articles, collections of this sort can be quite tedious, however excellent some of the individual pieces might be. The effect is that of reading the back issues of a journal all at one sitting.

Some editors are more ambitious and ingenious than others. The reader format has been used to stake out a new field, sum up research on a problem, demonstrate prevailing controversies, or focus on important issues in a field. In some readers the individual pieces form a coherent whole or illustrate different approaches to a central theme. Often an ideological harmony binds the essays together. Sometimes a brilliant editor imposes a new order on existing literature. Peter Ward and Robert McDonald's ambition, as stated in their all too brief preface, is more modest: "to provide college and university students with a textbook reflecting the interests of the province's most recent historians." They shrink from providing an interpretive framework of their own; they do not classify or count; nor do they hint at an emerging synthesis. Instead they merely select and sort, letting many authors and many voices speak for themselves.

Most of the essays included in this collection will be familiar to readers of this journal. Eleven of the thirty-one pieces were originally published in *BC Studies*. Eleven come from journals as diverse as *Explorations in Economic History*, the *Canadian Historical Review*, *Plan Canada* and

the *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*. Eight essays are taken from other anthologies. Only one, Jean Barman's paper on the Vernon Preparatory School, appears for the first time. Most of the articles reprinted here were published in the seventies; only one, a forty-year-old essay on the mining frontier, stretches the definition of recent work.

The editors group the essays in bunches under general headings: The Maritime Fur Trade, Indian-European Relations, Colonial Government and Society, Economic Development, Urban Growth, Industrial Conflict and the Labour Movement, Politics, Race and Ethnicity. Within each category one finds the expected landmark essays by Robin Fisher, Jean Usher, Keith Ralston, David Reid, Donald Paterson, Norbert MacDonald, David Bercuson, Stuart Jamieson, Margaret Ormsby, Peter Ward and Patricia Roy. Ward and McDonald turn up some unexpected surprises from widely scattered sources including Peter Cumming and Neil Mickenberg on native rights, James Gibson on Boston and Russian fur traders, Barry Gough on the nature of the British Columbia frontier, John Weaver on town planning in Vancouver, Jorgen Dahlie on Scandinavian immigrants, and Sanford Lyman on contrasts in the Japanese and Chinese communities. The emphasis is mainly upon social history with strong representation from both the old and the new economic history.

One of the advantages of this approach adopted by the editors is that it helps identify gaps in current research. Surprisingly, the resource industries have been little studied, and provincial political history has been positively neglected. Is it true that there has been nothing worth reprinting written on Social Credit? Are there no general interpretations of provincial politics to provide context for the three quite specific essays on the Tolmie and Pattullo administrations and the origins of the CCF? Why has what might be called the "left" tradition in B.C. historiography been ignored? Work by Paul Phillips and Martin Robin, for example, has not been included. Is this because their notions of class clash with that of the editors? Did they refuse permission? Certainly their unexplained absence helps preserve the illusion that B.C. historians scarcely, if ever, disagree.

In a splendid survey of the writing of British Columbia history, used here as an introduction, Allan Smith argues that the best historians never lost sight of the province's relationship with the world around it. He concludes: "The result was a body of writing which in its attempts to grapple with problems of context, orientation and social dynamic at all

times showed its authors anxious . . . to situate British Columbia in an appropriately comprehensive framework of analysis and discussion." At its best, provincial history is not parochial. For the most part the essays gathered in this collection live up to that standard. Certainly the list of those that do not is much shorter than the list of those that do. This reader stands as a challenge to British Columbia historians to complete the analysis and description of the province's social evolution in its Canadian context.

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Clifford Sifton. Volume One: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900, by David J. Hall. Vancouver and London: University of British Columbia Press, 1981. Pp. 361; *illus.*; index, \$27.50.

David Hall has been on the trail of Clifford Sifton for a dozen years. He has left no stone unturned — nor whatever dwelt underneath — in his patient and enormously thorough search. The result is this densely packed account of Sifton's career to the mid-point of his tenure as Minister of the Interior in Laurier's government. Sifton's progress to this point is summed up in the sobriquet which is the subtitle of this volume, *The Young Napoleon*, and which, the author might have told us, was applied to the aggressive minister by the opposition derisively.

This first volume divides naturally into Sifton's years in the Greenway government of Manitoba and his federal career. What links the two is the remarkable degree of flexibility of principles exhibited by Sifton. Almost every issue that he stoutly opposed as a member of the Manitoba cabinet — tariff, CPR, concessions to the Catholic minority, etc. — he found himself able to support vigorously in Ottawa. Does that make him a pragmatist, as Professor Hall suggests, or simply a trimmer?

The detail in the book is, at times, somewhat daunting; but the prodigious research has turned up many nuggets. Hall presents the first plausible explanation of the Logan case (Sifton instigated it), which has never made much sense. He closely analyzes the Manitoba Grain Act, hailed as a prairie Magna Carta, and exposes its fatal weaknesses. There are many other examples which could be cited.

But there is some dross as well. Least satisfactory is the section dealing