

naturalists; in 1817 the Nor-Westerners sold 98,240 sea otter pelts at Canton, but in 1820 only 21,826. One had not realized how soon and how seriously the decline started.

Victoria

RICHARD GLOVER

*Russia in Pacific Waters: A Survey of the Origins of Russia's Naval Presence in the North and South Pacific*, by Glynn Barratt. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981.

Mr. Barratt's purpose in this book is to describe Russia's naval ventures in northeast Asia and western America. His starting date is 1715, when a Russian party launched their first vessel — an open boat named *Okhota*, at Okhotsk — and he ends with the collapse of hopes for Russian naval hegemony in the North Pacific Ocean in 1824-25. He covers the early explorations of Bering, fur-trading, contact with Spaniards, British and Americans, and the difficulties the Russians faced.

He is to be congratulated on having done his research very thoroughly and has much information to offer. Unfortunately, however, his material too often deserves better presentation than it gets. For example, on page 237 he writes that in 1810 Simon McGillivray "failed totally to rouse Lord Wellesley to action" over "Gray's River." Here he does indeed identify McGillivray as a "Nor-Wester"; but how many will recognize "Gray's River" as the Columbia? And who was Wellesley? Plenty will recognize the family name of the Duke of Wellington — and may be misled as a result; but one questions how many students of northwestern history will recall that in 1809-12 Wellington's eldest brother, Richard, Lord Wellesley, was Britain's foreign minister; or that not the least of his problems in that position was keeping peace, as long as he could, with his country's principal rival on the Columbia — the U.S.A. — at a time when every nation in Europe outside Sicily and the Spanish peninsula was at war against Britain. Here one should add that no reader can afford to overlook Mr. Barratt's collection of "Preliminary Notes," for these explain Russian words and spellings that may otherwise baffle him (they occur on p. xvi, not p. xiv, as the table of contents states).

Of Russia's interests in Pacific waters one must say, first, that they were not managed well; second, that in general they were far from easy to manage at all; but third, in some ways at least they could surely have been managed much better.

The first and most obvious difficulty is summed up by "remoteness," for the Pacific was very far from Russia's capital. In 1785-86 it took Lt. Sarychev "from the middle of September" until March (p. 77) to reach Okhotsk from St. Petersburg — that is, six months of travel at the very time of the year when travelling should have been easiest, with rivers bridged by ice most of the time and plenty of snow to smooth the way for sleds, dog teams and skis; and it means, obviously, a wait of at least a year before the answer to a letter could arrive. Also, the government responsible for Russia's affairs in the northeast was simultaneously facing plenty of problems nearer to home; and the nearer problems were vastly bigger — for instance, such matters as wars with Poles and Prussians, with Persians and Turks, with Pugachev's rebellious peasants and, not least, with Bonaparte. Meanwhile Alaska had little to offer except furs, of which Siberia was also producing an abundance. (One wishes Mr. Barratt had had more to say on these topics, for they would help to put his subject in focus.)

Then there was the question of methods. How was Alaska to be managed — by private enterprise? Or by the government through its navy? The clash between these two was not easily resolved; and, if the Russian navy generally comes rather well out of Mr. Barratt's narrative, it is because the fundamental need was to employ first-rate men to tackle very real difficulties. The naval officers were usually Germans from Russia's Baltic provinces, so they brought German efficiency to their job, but Russia's farthest east had few attractions for most civilians who could do well elsewhere.

The most astonishing weakness displayed by the Russians, naval and civilian alike, was surely their failure "to provision the Pacific settlements reliably and economically," as Mr. Barrett writes (p. 236). It is true that they had no such resource as the great buffalo herds of our prairies, which until the mid-1880s provided the Canadian fur traders with pemmican, but there was an abundance of other things — notably salmon — which swarmed in the rivers of Alaska and Kamchatka and could be preserved by drying, salting, kippering, or (after ca. 1810) by canning. Also more species of wild geese either breed in or migrate through Alaska and Kamchatka than occur in Hudson Bay, where they were annually shot and salted by thousands to feed the fur traders. Reindeer (*alias* caribou) were abundant on both sides of Bering Strait, and pemmican can be made of their meat too. Yet in over a century the Russians never solved their supply problems satisfactorily.

The pains which Mr. Barratt has taken with his index are admirable but, at least in some degree, unfortunate. He has made, in effect, three indices — one for names of people, one for names of places and one for names of ships. Handy as this is, it denies him the opportunity to index other things — even such a thing as that most important of Pacific furs, the sea otter.

Mr. Barratt ends his book with a long and useful bibliography.

*Victoria*

RICHARD GLOVER

*Maps and Dreams*, by Hugh Brody. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1981.

We often think of the Indian people as a curiosity, of their reserves as squalid, of the life that many of them lead on urban skid roads as deplorable. These are the remnants of a culture well and truly past; only crafts, carvings and totem poles survive the wreckage.

It is true that Indian culture has been under attack ever since the first Europeans set foot in the New World. The Indians have been taught to believe that their religion, their languages, their ways of rearing children and, indeed, their whole way of life had to be discarded. Their enforced retreat has resulted in many casualties, but they have refused to assimilate or to give up their identity altogether. This new book, *Maps and Dreams*, reveals the capacity of the Indian people to endure.

Hugh Brody's book is about the hunting society of the Beaver Indians of northeastern B.C. He tells of their life on the reserve and in the forest as hunters. We are familiar with the demoralization that afflicts Indians on the reserves, but very few of us have seen the transformation that occurs in the bush. There the Indian becomes a hunter — resourceful, alert, tireless. In the bush he is himself again. Brody takes us into the bush with these hunters of the boreal forest.

The maps in Brody's book are those that the Indians discover in dreams — maps that lead them to their kills in the bush. The dreams are the dreams of white men — dreams of vanquishing the wilderness in the name of industry and progress. The white men have their maps too: maps that show rivers dammed, coal fields developed, and pipelines arcing across the ancient hunting grounds of the Indians.

Although, as Brody says, these hunting societies have been condemned by industrial man, the remarkable thing is that many of them, in defi-