

Book Reviews

The Men with Wooden Feet: The Spanish Exploration of the Pacific Northwest, by John Kendrick. NC Press, \$16.95. Pp. 168; 21 illustrations, bibliography, appendix and index.

It is unfortunate that the publishers claim more for this work than it purports to be. It is not correct to say that "never before have the journals of the Spanish explorers . . . been published," and this is not "the first book in English or Spanish which covers their voyages in depth." The first statement ignores the publications of the Instituto Histórico de Marina, Madrid, and the translations of a number of the more important journals by H. R. Wagner, I. H. Wilson, C. Jane and others, and the second does not take into account the work of historians such as H. H. Bancroft, C. E. Chapman, D. C. Cutter, W. M. Mathes, D. Pethick and C. I. Archer, nor the monumental work, "Floodtide of Empire," of Warren Cook. The author himself claims only that his book is an "arrangement of things discovered by others." As a keen sailor with an extensive knowledge of the waters of the Pacific Northwest, especially of British Columbia, and possessing an inquiring mind, he wanted to find out more about the first explorers of so much of the coast and to share what he found. Something of the joy of discovery, expressed in a relaxed style, of what the Spanish explorers accomplished runs through this book.

Kendrick has no particular thesis to argue. He gives us a very personal, straightforward narrative of Spain's effort over a twenty-year period to delineate the North Pacific shore, taking formal possession at particular points, and the search for the mythical Northwest Passage to thwart British and Russian threats to its claim to exclusive sovereignty over its "lake." In the same way as Australians and New Zealanders tend to think of Cook as their discoverer, overlooking the prior explorations of the Dutch, Canadians think first of Cook and Vancouver. As Wagner wrote in the foreword to his "Spanish Explorations in the Strait of Juan de Fuca," "the great reputations attained by Captain James Cook and

Captain George Vancouver for their work of exploration on the north-west coast of America have completely dwarfed in the minds of the public the achievements of the Spanish during the same period." For this the Spanish have largely themselves to blame, as they were not interested in publishing their records and charts for fear that the information they contained would be useful to their rivals. Kendrick's purpose is to redress the balance without, however, deprecating the brilliant accomplishments of Cook and Vancouver.

Although all the expeditions are covered, from Perez' in 1774 to those carried out in 1791 and 1792 by Malaspina, Galiano and Valdes, Caamaño and Eliza, there is an imbalance in the treatment accorded them. Perez receives two pages, and the Heceta-Bodega y Quadra voyage of the following year is given eleven pages. Yet the most carefully prepared and perhaps costliest expedition, that of Arteaga and Bodega y Quadra in 1779, receives only eleven lines and the Fidalgo survey of Prince William Sound in 1790 only seven. The greatest amount of space is given to the Galiano-Valdes circumnavigation of Vancouver Island, perhaps because the proceeds of the sale of the book go to the Galiano Historical and Cultural Society for the reconstruction of Galiano's ship, the *Sutil*. In Kendrick's narrative, the main interest is in the explorations; the political, economic and strategic considerations which prompted them are only lightly touched on. In a few instances, the text is enlivened with a phrase from a journal or report. One would like to have more such quotations, but Kendrick cannot be faulted for this. Unlike Burney, King and Clerke, who wrote uninhibited accounts of Cook's third voyage, Spanish naval officers seldom reveal much of themselves in their reports, which tend to be matter-of-fact. Nor is it often possible to read between the lines to get "inside" them. On the other hand, Kendrick has a good chapter on Galiano's method of navigation and another on the Nootka language two hundred years ago and today, with an appendix containing a vocabulary in English and Spanish based on Moziño's of 1792.

Kendrick states (page 11) that the Galiano-Valdes expedition was not of "primary importance" — a view shared with the two captains. To agree is to forget that Spain's purpose in expending considerable resources with inadequate materials to explore and chart the coast north of San Francisco was to protect her self-proclaimed jurisdiction. As early as 1774, Viceroy Bucareli expressed the policy pithily: "Any establishment by Russia or any other foreign power on the continent ought to be prevented not because the King needs to enlarge his realms — he has within his realms more than it will be possible to populate in centuries — but in

order to avoid the consequences of having as neighbours others than the Indians." The defence of her realms included the investigation and charting of all waters, channels, rivers and inlets to provide evidence of sovereignty. The importance of the task, however tedious and dangerous, was constantly stressed by the home government and was strongly pressed by Viceroy Revilla Gigedo and Bodega y Quadra, to whom fell the principal task of co-ordinating the effort between 1789 and 1794. The non-existence of the Northwest Passage in the waters between Vancouver Island and the mainland could not be taken for granted.

This is a book to be welcomed and enjoyed on its own terms. It is to be hoped that it will stimulate the production of a well-researched monograph dealing with the subject in depth and written from a Canadian perspective. Such a work is needed not only because the Spanish explorations deserve such a study but to help us better understand the significance of the meeting between Vancouver and Bodega y Quadra at Friendly Cove in 1792, the bicentennial of which we will soon be observing.

Four minor errors were noted. Mourelle was pilot of the *Favorita*, not the *Princesa*, on the expedition of 1779 (page 30). Bodega y Quadra did not die in Tepic but in Mexico City (page 134). Cook did not name Friendly Cove (pages 15, 35 and 93); ironically, it seems that it was Meares who gave it the name we know it as today, for so it first appears in his published journal of 1790. The Malaspina charts of 1791 call it "Cala de los Amigos," an exact translation from the English. By the same token, "Nootka Sound" was not Cook's choice (pages 30, 91 and 118) but that of a committee which met at the home of Sir Joseph Banks to settle on place names for the publication of Cook's account of his third voyage.

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Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts, by Douglas Cole. Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985. Pp. xiii + 373; \$24.95.

In his needlessly apologetic introduction to this survey of the collection of the artifacts of the native peoples of British Columbia, Douglas Cole implies that his book would interest anthropologists and ethnohistorians more than historians. This would be a pity, for there is much to be