

industry as ancillary to the American. Limiting his British Columbia research mainly to the *Pacific Coast Lumberman*, Workmen's Compensation statistics and a couple of novels, he leaves unexplored other potential sources such as B.C. government reports and Department of Labour records, industry and union manuscript collections, and oral histories. He ignores entirely the development of forestry in B.C. from the mid-1930s to the early 1970s, thus overlooking the implications for workers' safety of profound technological changes in, and decentralization away from the coast of, logging and milling after the Second World War. Prouty states that much is known about labour turmoil, the struggle for unionism, and conservation in Pacific Coast forest history (p. xvii); in fact, we know very little about these subjects for B.C. Statements that British Columbia had a better accident prevention rate in the woods after 1916 than did its American counterparts, and that available literature suggests greater emphasis on safety and accident prevention in B.C. (p. 161), are also unsubstantiated.

While ultimately unsatisfactory as a work of historical interpretation, *More Deadly Than War* draws attention to a significant but overlooked part of our industrial past. It leaves a profound impression of the risks that timber industry workers have endured for more than a century. In so doing it charts a course for future research in the field of forest history.

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*This Is My Own: Letters to Wes & Other Writings on Japanese Canadians, 1941-1948*, by Muriel Kitagawa, edited by Roy Miki. Vancouver, B.C.: Talonbooks, 1985. Pp. viii, 302.

This collection of writings on Japanese Canadians is really three books in one: an extended essay by Roy Miki, the editor, on the life and times of Muriel Kitagawa; the real meat of the book, her letters to her brother Wes, a University of Toronto medical student, between 12 December 1941 and 29 May 1942; and a selection of her published and unpublished writings from December 1941 to 1948. Kitagawa was a gifted writer. Although she wrote quickly and without much opportunity for revision, she is always clear, frequently forceful and sometimes poetic. Historians will appreciate the perceptive contemporary and retrospective reflections of a well-informed and articulate Nisei and vivid descriptions of the daily worries of a young mother in the uncertain months after

Pearl Harbor; literary scholars will discover the origins of many of the writings of "Aunt Emily" in Joy Kogawa's novel, *Obasan*.

In his introductory essay, Roy Miki used Kitagawa's own work, the *New Canadian* (the Nisei newspaper) and secondary sources, notably Ann Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism* (1981), to trace the events after Pearl Harbor from the Japanese-Canadian point of view. Alas, his biographical sketch of Kitagawa is so brief it leaves the reader curious. What happened to Kitagawa's mother and sister, who were stranded in Japan while visiting in 1941? More importantly, Miki remarks that after 1949 Kitagawa's interests turned away from the war years, but he does not reveal why this occurred or why she abandoned her autobiography. His own involvement in the Japanese Canadian redress movement undoubtedly explains his interest in property losses and his belief that for "racist politicians," "the uprooting of Japanese Canadians from the West Coast was *the* opportunity to confiscate and liquidate their properties" (p. 62). It also reflects Kitagawa's observation that her house "was lost through injustice" (p. 229).

Indeed, both in her letters to the custodian of Japanese property, who was selling her family home despite her protests, and in her reflective essays, Kitagawa links her desire for compensation with a demand for justice and equality. Reparations, she wrote in 1945 or 1946, would be "the outward symbol acknowledging the loss of our rights" (p. 229). In the 1930s Kitagawa was one of the young Nisei who campaigned unsuccessfully for the full Canadian citizenship they had learned about in school. The line, "This is my own, my native land" from Walter Scott's poem, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," which she memorized in Grade 8, became her theme. Though her disillusionment increased as she saw the indignities of her people being "finger-printed, card-indexed, corralled and driven to scatter far and wide" (p. 235), her loyalty to Canada never wavered. Indeed, she was so much a British Columbian that in January 1942 she complained of the province's inadequate defences and of the "People east [who] are so 'bomb remote' they don't realize our danger" (p. 86).

For Kitagawa, the root of the problem was racial. Though some whites, especially those in regular contact such as her high school English teacher, the milkman and neighbours, remained friendly, she saw anti-Japanese agitation as "rank race persecution" (p. 88). She observed that the strength and weakness of the Japanese Canadian community "lay in a communal solidarity that was an offence in the sight of the anti-Japanese

elements" (p. 218), but noted the divisions within the community. She refers to inter-generational conflicts over dating and marriage customs, but she saves her venom for Nisei "hotheads" who wanted to grab power even though they lacked experience and especially for the "little Napoleon and his henchmen" — that is, Etsuji Morii and associates, who worked with the B.C. Security Commission and who, allegedly, accepted bribes in return for such favours as permits allowing individual Japanese to delay their departure from the coast. These divisions are more fully analyzed in Miki's introduction.

The internal splits, of course, were part of the general confusion and sense of helplessness which pervaded Japanese Canadian society in the months after Pearl Harbor. "There is a pall of ignorance and fear and uncertainty which arouses defiant resistance and plain mulish balking" (p. 109), she explained to her brother. Kitagawa declared her determination "to survive" the evacuation in March 1942. After the war she pondered that "some good came out of the evacuation, not because the evacuation was good, but because the people had in them the guts to make good after misfortune" (p. 228). Her writings demonstrate that despite her "guts," she suffered from confusion and a sense of helplessness after she learned that the Japanese would be "forced to move out from our homes . . . to where we don't know (p. 89). Her personal circumstances were complicated by the arrival of twins in January 1942. Requests for disposable diapers, apparently unavailable in Vancouver but required for the inevitable journey, punctuate musings about where she should go. Should she endure separation from her husband by taking the twins and their two older siblings to one of the ghost towns? Should they go as a family to one of the self-supporting settlements? Should they join brother Wes in Toronto even though the journey would be costly and, from afar, her husband would not easily get back to his old desk at the Bank of Montreal in Vancouver after the war? Eventually, through Wes and his friends at Carlton United Church, the Kitagawa family found a place in Toronto. Alas, neither Kitagawa's writings nor Miki's introduction provide much information on their life in eastern Canada.

Though the reader is left wanting to know much more about the Kitagawa family, this volume is a fine addition to the growing body of literature by and about the Japanese Canadians. Kitagawa was unusually articulate, but she was not the only Japanese Canadian to keep a written record of the war years. One hopes the appearance of *This Is My Own* will encourage similar publications and, especially, translations of diaries

and memoirs written in Japanese. Such writings, even if they are not as poetic as Kitagawa's work, would provide additional insights into one of the most tragic events of modern Canadian history, the removal of the Japanese from the coast and the confiscation of their property.

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*Farming the Frontier; The Agricultural Opening of the Oregon Country, 1786-1846*, by James R. Gibson. Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 1985. Pp. 264.

"Canadians," James Gibson writes, "should not forget that they were dispossessed of part of their rightful Columbia heritage, a heritage whose economic potential in general and agricultural possibilities in particular were initially and successfully demonstrated by the Hudson's Bay Company," (p. 205). Such a conclusion reflects a persistent resentment of the British assessment of geo-political realities on the west coast of North America in the mid-nineteenth century. With the signing of the Oregon Treaty in 1846 the northern boundary of the United States, the 49th parallel, was extended to the Pacific. This extension involved the surrender of British interest in a substantial area north of the Columbia River. The Oregon Treaty, therefore, marked the failure of the attempts by the HBC to secure the integrity of its operations in the Cordillera: henceforth new solutions would be required. It is the first of these points, the structure of HBC activities before 1846, which provides the major focus of Gibson's study.

The area west of the continental divide posed serious problems for the new HBC which emerged from the merger of 1821 — problems sufficiently serious to require personal investigation by Governor George Simpson in 1824, 1828 and 1841. Looming above even the unresolved issue of political sovereignty was the question of the profitability of the fur trade. "Everything," Simpson observed on his 1824 visit "appears to me on the Columbia on too extended a scale except the Trade" (p. 16). Simpson's fertile but parsimonious mind generated a variety of solutions to these difficulties, but two were of particular importance for Gibson's study: a push for self-sufficiency in the Columbia Department and a quest for diversification beyond the strict confines of the fur trade.

The first of these solutions involved the elaboration of agricultural production in the Cordillera, thus reducing the costly importation of