

The book was produced in a great hurry to be ready for Expo, and suffers from this. The reader has to put up with an annoying number of typographical and spelling errors, and the book could have done with more careful editing. Still, apart from Franch's article, it is an absorbing book to read, and a useful book to study.

The book is generously illustrated. It is worth buying just for the well selected pictures, drawings, and maps. This comment has been reserved until now because *To the Totem Shore* should not be looked on as a "coffee table" book, but as a work of history.

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The Subarctic Indians and the Fur Trade 1680-1860, by J. C. Yerbury.
Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986. Pp. 200.
\$22.95.

Perhaps the most significant events affecting research on the early history of Canada in areas outside the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes watershed were the microfilming of the magnificent Hudson's Bay Company Archives (completed in 1966 for records up to 1870) and their transfer from London to Winnipeg in 1974. These events marked the beginning of general accessibility to an enormous source of data, giving scholars the opportunity to write history in exquisite detail. Besides innumerable articles and theses, a number of significant books have appeared, based in large part on these archives. Bishop's *The Northern Ojibwa and the Fur Trade* (1974), Ray's *Indians in the Fur Trade* (1974), Ray and Freeman's "*Give Us Good Measure*" (1978), Francis and Morantz's *Partners in Furs* (1983), and Krech's *The Subarctic Fur Trade* (1984) would all have been impossible twenty years earlier. Yerbury's work is the latest addition to this growing list of books on the fur trade and related changes in native life. Using the Hudson's Bay Co. archives, with methods as well as some of the concepts developed by his predecessors, Yerbury does for the Chipewyan and their neighbours in the subarctic what the others did for the Cree on the Eastmain, the Ojibwa in northern Ontario, and the Assiniboine and the Cree on the Plains and adjacent Woodlands.

After a brief review of earlier work on his topic, interwoven with comments on the nature of ethnohistorical research, Yerbury lays the chronological foundations for his work. Basically it follows the model proposed by Ray and Bishop in 1976 with modifications to accord with the specific history of the western subarctic. Based as it is on a thorough understanding of the documented history of the area, rather than oral history or speculation, this is a definitive framework composed of three eras (pre-historic, protohistoric, and historic). The last era is subdivided into five well-defined periods. The protohistoric (1680-1769) and the first three periods of the historic era (1770-1860) each form major chapters in the book. The formulation of such a framework and a discussion of the developing fur trade within that framework was one of the major aims of the book and one that was admirably achieved. In fact Yerbury's discussion is so convincing that it will become a standard reference in place of the *Subarctic* volume of the Smithsonian *Handbook of North American Indians* (1981).

The last chapter pulls together a number of themes on the nature of Athapaskan culture change: changing economic conditions, adaptations to a changing resource base, and changing social organization. These changes are convincingly attributed to the expanding fur trade and accompanying calamities such as the spread of diseases.

The overall strength of the book is the thoroughness with which the aims of the book have been treated, the convincing way in which the arguments have been presented, and the detail in which evidence has been documented. In view of this comment, any criticisms I have become a matter of personal preference. The organization of the book and the manner in which the discussion proceeds are tailored to an audience already well versed in the subject. I would have preferred an early chapter (after the Introduction) on prehistoric ecological relations that would form a basis for the subsequent chapters. Enough archaeological work has been done by now in the subarctic to trace the broad outline of geographical distributions, settlement patterns, and seasonal changes in subsistence strategies. Graduate students, for example, who have read the book found it useful to read the last chapter on culture change before they worked their way through the development of the fur trade. I would also like to have seen a more detailed discussion of exactly what constitutes "dependency" on European trade goods, at what point dependency is reached, and what the evidence for it is. This word implies so much and is used far too loosely. The early wars between the Chipewyan and Cree are another matter that needs additional discussion. One is left with the im-

pression that these wars had something to do with the fur trade. What is not explored is whether such a conflict could have had prehistoric roots similar to Chipewyan-Inuit animosities or many of the early antagonisms in eastern Canada. There are a number of minor points, none of which seriously detract from the book.

The graphs and tables are all clear and to the point, but what the book needs is more maps. Changing locations of native groups are not well illustrated even though Yerbury has done some of the better work on the Chipewyan. The precontact distributions (Figures 1 and 15) changed greatly over time and are eminently mappable. In fact the entire subject of the book is an eminently geographical one, yet the geography of the fur trade is left too much to the imagination of the reader. Since Ray's *Indians in the Fur Trade* served in part as a model for this work, the omission of so much that is geographical is surprising.

The Subarctic Indians is a substantial contribution to the fur trade history of Canada. As the first detailed treatment of all the Subarctic Athapaskan groups it will provide a basis for further treatment of particular themes and native histories.

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Canada's Colonies: A History of the Yukon and Northwest Territories,
by Kenneth Coates. Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1985. Pp.
251, paper.

Professor Coates has undertaken an ambitious task in covering a truly vast subject — the history of the northern territories from aboriginal time to the 1980s — in a brief 230-page, 60,000-word span. The treatment, accordingly, is selective, the subjects and examples cited reflecting the author's own interests and areas of research, and also the availability of published secondary materials. The focus is on the Yukon Territory, which received half or more of the space, including not only the obligatory review of the Klondike gold rush (the subject of his chapter 3) but also most of chapters 4 on the interwar period ("The Doldrums in the Middle North") and 6 on the Second World War ("The Army's North"). Furthermore, the treatment readily slips into Yukon aspects and illustrations in the remaining historical chapters, "The Early Fur Trade," "Boom and Bust in the Arctic," and "The Bureaucrats' North." For example, the emphasis in the Arctic chapter is on "West Side"