

From Maps to Metaphors: The Pacific World of George Vancouver, edited by Robin Fisher and Hugh Johnston. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1993. x, 365 pp. Illus. \$39.95 cloth.

Although the quincentennial in 1992 of the first Columbian voyage drew popular world attention, maritime historians also recognized the bicentennial of two of Columbus' great successors, Alejandro Malaspina and George Vancouver. While Columbus initiated the exploration of the New World in 1492, Malaspina and Vancouver can be said to have finished it in 1792 through detailed reconnaissance of its final unknown corner, the Pacific Northwest. In April 1992, editors Fisher and Johnston convened the Vancouver Conference on Exploration and Discovery at Simon Fraser University to commemorate the many contributions of the Vancouver voyage of 1792-1794; this volume comprises a selection of papers given at that conference.

Following a brief preface of oral tradition, "How the Squamish Remember George Vancouver" by Luis Miranda and Philip Joe, Professors Fisher and Johnston provide a concise introduction through an overview of Vancouver's voyage and its major achievements, a fundamental historiography of the event, and a review of the papers selected for this volume. Chapter 1, "James Cook and the European Discovery of Polynesia" by Ben Finney, treats scientific achievements of the great navigator in the South Pacific, with a good treatment of Spanish, Dutch, and French voyages there. Glyndwr Williams in chapter 2, "Myth and Reality: The Theoretical Geography of Northwest America from Cook to Vancouver," covers the English search for a water passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic in the eighteenth century and ending of the searching through explorations of Cook and Vancouver. "Vancouver's Survey Methods and Surveys" by Andrew David, and "Vancouver's Chronometers" by Alun C. Davies, in chapters 3 and 4, respectively, deal with technical aspects of the voyage.

"A Notable Absence: The Lateness and Lameness of Russian Discovery and Exploration in the Pacific, 1639-1803," chapter 5, by James Gibson, gives an overview of Russian advances in the most difficult of climates and terrain through Siberia in search of sources for furs and arrival in the North Pacific, although he appears overly critical of their delay in doing this, and gives traditional credence to the supposed Spanish concern over the "Russian threat" in the region, when, in fact, that concern was over English encroachment. Chapter 6, "Nootka Sound and the Beginnings of Britain's Imperialism of Free Trade" by Alan Frost, discusses policy and manoeuvring in the area prior to

Vancouver, and a particularly fine overview by Christon Archer of Spanish policy, ethnography, and contact in the northwest follows in chapter 7, "Seduction before Sovereignty: Spanish Efforts to Manipulate the Natives in Their Claims to the Northwest Coast." This theme, as related specifically to complex interactions and alliances between Europeans and Vancouver Island Indian groups, and even greater intricacies of relationships among the latter, are well treated in chapter 8, "Dangerous Liaisons: Maquinna, Quadra, and Vancouver in Nootka Sound, 1790-5" by Yvonne Marshall. This interaction as related to art is interestingly covered by Victoria Wyatt in chapter 9, "Art and Exploration: The Responses of Northwest Coast Native Artists to Maritime Explorers and Fur Traders." Somewhat out of order in the volume is W. Kaye Lamb's fine historiographical treatise on the formation of Archibald Menzies' journal in chapter 11, "Banks and Menzies: Evolution of a Journal."

The scenario shifts from the Pacific Northwest to the South Pacific in chapters 10, 12, and 13. "Kidnapped: Tuki and Huri's Involuntary Visit to Norfolk Island in 1793" by Anne Salmond, "The Intellectual Discovery and Exploration of Polynesia" by K.R. Howe, and "The Burden of Terra Australis: Experiences of Real and Imagined Lands" by David Mackay discuss, respectively, introduction of flax-working to the penal colony of Norfolk; Eurocentric and evangelical views of Polynesian cultures, primarily in the nineteenth century; and the gradual realization that Australia was not the idyllic "New World" as originally imagined.

The work is enhanced by a useful and interesting appendix, compiled by Andrew David, listing Vancouver's instruments, drawings, and charts and by eighteen illustrations of contemporary engravings and paintings, and seven maps appropriately placed in the texts, although a general map of Vancouver's track is unfortunately absent. An analytical index facilitates use of this nicely printed and bound volume. While all of the articles are well researched and interestingly presented, and are of interest to historians of the Pacific Ocean, there are times when the relationship of some of them to Vancouver's voyage is rather tenuous; this is especially true of those chapters treating the South Pacific. Also, very little information is provided relative to pre-eighteenth century Pacific maritime exploration by Spain, which explains the need for Vancouver's voyage and reconnaissance in the first place. Traditional English misuse of Spanish names (Quadra for Bodega; De Fonte for Fonte, etc.) and their irregular accenting also gives a tinge of anglophilia to the volume.

These criticisms notwithstanding, *From Maps to Metaphors* is an important addition to any collection of Pacific Basin history.

Emeritus, University of San Francisco

W. MICHAEL MATHES

Memories of Cumberland Chinatown, by Philip C. P. Low. Privately printed, 1993. "For Information address: Rhonda Low, 12 East 8th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5T 1R3." 92 pp. Illus. \$12.95 paper.

Anyone familiar with B.C. studies or with the history of Chinese Canadians is aware that Cumberland was, until the 1920s, a major site of Chinese residence. Most of the descendants of Chinese families who lived there have now moved elsewhere, although some of them regularly keep in touch through an annual picnic in Vancouver's Stanley Park. They share photographs, reminiscences, and a sense that something of their shared past — a time and place — should be preserved. Philip C. P. Low's newly published reminiscences provide some of what has been hoped for. This is not a scholarly piece, but a set of remembrances, with photos, centring on the life and activities of Mr. Low's father, the Chinese community leader Low Sue.

A book of this kind helps all of us, whether from Cumberland or not, fix in our minds such things as the location of the two Chinese streets and the importance of schooling and the way it is now remembered. These and other pieces of information supply a framework for future research.

Two things struck me. The first was a reminder of the presence that a few leaders could and did have in the lives of community members in a Chinese settlement of 1,000 or so, as Cumberland's was in the early decades of this century. Low Sue is bound to be the centrepiece of his son's memoirs. But there can be little doubt that he and a few others — and organizations like the Chinese Freemasons — were the organizing posts for community activities. A second was the statement that Chinese girls began to attend schools only about the time of World War I. Why was this so? The preference given to sons' education by Chinese parents is well known. But why did girls' education become acceptable at that particular time? The instant answer of China-oriented Chinese would probably be the 1911 Revolution in China. What other answers, Canadian-made, might there have been?