

analysis of the industrial/political situations underlying the pre-FTA trade relations and those possible under the FTA.

It is regrettable that some of these Canadian and American studies badly need updating from their 1983 or 1988 bases. In them the recession seems hardly to have started. To use this book to take a view on B.C.'s internal and trade-policy forest choices, the B.C. reader must somehow get up to date. Having done so, such a reader will find the topics taken up in the volume's other chapters unusually enlightening.

Vancouver

ANTHONY SCOTT

*Three's A Crew*, by Kathrene Pinkerton. Ganges: Horsdal and Schubert, 1991. 320 pp. Map, illus. \$14.95 paper. (First published by Carrick & Evans, New York, 1940).

*Three's A Crew* is Kathrene Pinkerton's account of her cruises on the British Columbia coast between 1924 and 1930 with her husband Robert and their daughter Bobs. Midwesterners and professional writers, in 1917 they had gone to California, but in 1924, tiring of what Pinkerton called "the usual routine of proper schools, dancing lessons, the inevitable orthodontia for a growing child, and a decent neighborhood in which to bring up a daughter," they decided to "spend a summer cruising the intricate coastline of British Columbia." From their base at the Seattle Yacht Club, the Pinkertons took the *Yakima*, a thirty-six foot cruiser, north to British Columbia. This book, the final result of seven voyages, was first published in 1940, ten years after the most recent of the events described.

The book is in two halves. The first sixteen chapters (of thirty) concern the Pinkertons' first two summers on the coast; they dwell on travel, work, description, and place; on the challenges of living together and bringing up a child on a boat. British Columbia disappears in the wandering and formless final ten chapters, which deal mainly with Kathrene and Robert's sporadic tours of southeastern Alaska. As British Columbia disappears, however, a powerful mother-daughter story emerges.

The book is about national differences and their effect on Pinkerton and Bobs. Pinkerton insisted that the coast of British Columbia was different from the coasts to the north and south. Nowhere does she refer to Canada. This is "British Columbia," "the British Empire," and "Great Britain." Her first chapter is called "Going Foreign." When she finally reached Alaska, she wrote that it was "different"; she found a "warmth," "friendliness," "an instant sense of fellowship" there. "Nothing had led

us to expect an international boundary to change the flavour of a country, yet we sensed the change soon after crossing the line.”

Her perception of unfriendliness may have been conditioned by her nationality and class. While Pinkerton thought she was heading north from Seattle into the “unknown,” into a frontier, in fact she took a voyage to another culture. Institutionally and demographically, the province possessed a post-colonial Englishness, but English class distinctions, nurtured in provincial private schools, were under assault in the forest. “In the old country,” Billy Welsh of Purple Lagoon told her, “they grade men like we grade cedar and that chap thinks he’s number one. Old country grading ain’t done by the soundness of the timber. It’s just the barkmark men carry.” And on an unnamed Gulf Island the *Yakima*, flying the stars and stripes, dropped anchor at a “secluded cove.” While bathing in a natural sandstone tub they heard voices above them; “We looked up into the startled and indignant faces of an Englishman and his three sub-teen daughters. They stood in a line like steps. Baggey black bathing suits apparently bought for them to grow in, and white towels clasped to their bosoms, made them look like a row of enraged penguins.” The Pinkertons retreated, leaving the unnamed family “staring after us, a frieze of British wrath and outrage.” Pinkerton’s frontier was somebody else’s home.

Her patterns of naming reflect her upbringing and allegiance. The allusions, symbols, and institutions are American: we hear of Miss America, Daniel Boone, Paul Bunyan (twice), Christopher Columbus, the Smithsonian Institution, Uncle Sam, the Fourth of July, baseball, and fishing streams in New England. Non-Americans on the coast tend to be anonymous. Apart from a few loggers (the Dunseiths of Simoon Sound, Dave Connel of Seymour Inlet, and Billy Welsh of Purple Lagoon), and two well-known families (the Hunts of Fort Rupert and the Hallidays of Kingcome Inlet), Native people and Canadian and British settlers go nameless; they’re part of the background, the “unknown.” We hear of “an Orkney Islander,” “an Englishman,” “two charming Englishmen,” “a provincial policeman,” “a game warden,” “a postmistress,” “Two Finn Partners,” “a missionary and two women assistants,” “lady missionaries,” “a forestry superintendent,” “a Cambridge man,” “the widow of a missionary,” “the school matron,” “an old fellow.”

Pinkerton’s descriptions of the coast and its communities are, however, as Charles Lillard notes in the foreword, very good. The place overwhelmed her. Seymour Narrows and Yucletaw Rapids were “bottleneck openings through which flows the northern tidal water serving the Gulf of Georgia. Twice each lunar day tides raise the level of the gulf and all

its channels, straits, inlets, arms, bays, and coves from eight to twenty feet. Twice daily all that immense amount of water must flow back to the open ocean. This surge and ebb, this filling and emptying of a large and complicated region, must take place through these narrow channels." "Every time the tide goes out it sets a table."

Her description of the floating logging camps of the "logging Eldorado" of Knight and Seymour inlets is superb if dated. These were masculine places. "Women and hens — they must put their feet on land. Kinship with the earth is femaleness and as insistent as the male instinct for boats." Some of the women climbed up the mountains from the water to the "slashings" where, she wrote, they "watched their men at work and shared the excitement over a growing boom. They were the happy ones, for they were defeating a country which frustrated femaleness." She noted the transition from hand logging to logging with donkey engines. "Even Rockefeller couldn't finance the ideas that come into a man's head when he sees these things," a lumberman told her. Pinkerton discovered "logical and original thinking" of a high order in the logging camps. She met one Steve, "a completely disillusioned capitalist," a hand-logger who had recently bought a donkey engine in the belief that "power logging would give him ease." He wished he had remained a hand-logger. "And look at me!" Steve said, "Instead of the donkey working for me, I'm working for the donkey. Investment, pay roll of seven, fire regulations, and I got to have a show big enough to pay to set up the rig. I got to sell my boom no matter what the market is so I can meet expenses. I saved to buy that critter over there, and it's eating me up."

These rich descriptions of gender, work, and natural grandeur and sustenance are, however, incidental to the plot of the book, which is Bobs Pinkerton's exposure and assimilation to British Columbia society.

At first, when Pinkerton had Bobs with her on the boat, "The usual gap between adult and child was closed because we did everything together." This changed in 1925 when she transferred Bobs from her school in San Francisco to an "English boarding school a few miles outside Victoria." This was Strathcona Girls' School at Shawnigan Lake. Pinkerton thought the new school "a bit severe." "The English system of abrupt dismissal of parental anxieties is kind but disturbing. The manner of the mistresses implied that for generations English schools had taken charge of the very young and made a successful affair of their upbringing. But as I said good-by to an unfamiliar child, proudly wearing an odd blue tunic and school tie, whose main interest was that I carry on as calmly as the other well-trained parents, I felt as though I had casually handed in a

package at the proper wicket." Her feelings of anxiety were well founded, and mixed perhaps with guilt. After a winter at the school Bobs had changed. "She still committed the depredations of a twelve-year old. . . . But now she murmured 'Sorry' like a grown-up. I found myself less a mother than a hostess."

In the end Bobs was assimilated by the host society. While Pinkerton celebrated the Fourth of July, Bobs insisted on celebrating the Queen's Birthday. "Bobs played tennis and went sailing. She and I went on day-long shopping expeditions into Victoria, where we selected school clothes and topped off at teas with other mothers and daughters who had spent similar days. When the excitement was over, Bobs went off to school, a dignified upper sixth-former." By 1929, Bobs had been assimilated into the interwar Anglo-British Columbian élite of private property, private schools, private yachts, and private balls; of tennis, badminton, blazers, tunics, fruit cake, ginger beer, dancing parties, holiday teas, luncheons, and evening dresses, all of which Pinkerton describes with curiosity and distance. Bobs' graduation in 1930 coincided with the onset of the Great Depression; both events close the narrative. "The mop of blond hair, once brushed only under compulsion, was now trained in waves. Her head . . . was almost level with mine. She had made that transition from child to woman."

Bobs, then, adapted to the culture of the coastal élite, not to that of Billy Welsh, Wildcat Anderson, or Ben Marr. Her assimilation makes the book a British Columbian story, saves it from being simply a foreigner's look at the British Columbia coast, and justifies its reprint by a British Columbian publisher. Pinkerton, meanwhile, experienced a growing sense of cultural estrangement from her daughter. While Bobs adapted, her mother did not: she remained outside, a tourist, an observer, a foreigner on a coast of Native people and immigrants whose experience most emphatically was not American. Her fixed point remained the Seattle Yacht Club. Her assimilation was limited to wintering in 1924-25 in a log cabin on the Gulf of Georgia while her boat was being rebuilt in Seattle; to her adoption of Chinook words like saltchuck and qualicum ("a strong local night wind which comes up with little or no warning"); and to a winter in Victoria.

It is strange, then, that Lillard is blind both to Pinkerton's awareness of national differences and to the evolving and increasingly strained relationship with her daughter that unites the two halves of the book. He makes no mention of either. Instead, he obscures national differences (the key to the book) under the rhetoric of a Greater Northwest Coast, a place where

people, cultures, and institutions are undifferentiated, happily part of a grand historical and cultural continuum akin to the Northwest Coast Native "culture areas" of anthropologists.<sup>1</sup> The book is set, Lillard writes in the foreword, between Puget Sound and Alaska; "between Seattle and Haines." Lillard's generalizations about "our local history" and "our coast" beg the questions: Whose? Whose coast? What coast? What and where is the "Northwest Coast"? Who defined, or defines, the term? What is the necessity, let alone the legitimacy, of the term after 150 years of separate and distinctive economic, political, legal, cultural, and social history? Lillard, who grew up in Alaska, perhaps naturally views this region as an indivisible whole; but his is a view that does violence to Pinkerton's book, the contents of which, far from supporting notions of regional unity of cultures, refute them on every page. Lillard's Northwest Coast is not a place I know, and is not a place I can find in *Three's a Crew*.

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<sup>1</sup> Lillard presents his thoughts on this theme in greater detail in his "Comment" in *The Malahat Review* 60 (October 1981): 5-9.