

BOOK REVIEWS

*Native Art of the Northwest Coast:
A History of Changing Ideas*

Charlotte Townsend-Gault,
Jennifer Kramer, and
Ki-ke-in, editors

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013. 1120 pp.
\$195.00 cloth.

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THE ESSAYS AND THE many previously published texts gathered together in this weighty tome demonstrate the extent to which, over the course of the past 250 years, “the idea of Northwest Coast Native art has been historically constructed through texts as much as through the global diaspora of the objects themselves” (1). Thus we have Ira Jacknis’s learned article on the writings of explorers and ethnographers during the early years of European exploration on the Northwest Coast (1770-1870). Andrea Laforet puts into context the way that ethnographers like Franz Boas and amateur collectors like Charles F. Newcombe – all active on the Northwest Coast between 1880 and 1930 – gave accounts of the culture they observed and the objects they collected. In “Going by the Book: Missionary Perspectives,” John Barker shows how

some missionaries, by recording languages and collecting Native art, were paradoxically preserving what they themselves were seeking to destroy.

What is so fascinating about these essays and the appended documents is the evidence they provide to show that Aboriginal people were, in Barker’s words, not only “active players in their own histories” but also “put their new religious identity to creative as well as destructive uses” (235). During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, William Beynon and George Hunt, among many other Aboriginal persons, contributed enormously to the work of ethnologists and collectors. Conversely, the Kwakwaka’wakw peoples at Fort Rupert (Tsaxis), in resisting conversion by the Order of Oblate missionaries, thereby fostered carving, painting, and winter ceremonies. Martha Black takes the discussion to the end of the twentieth century by showing how collaborative exhibitions curated by non-Native and First Nations people have become the norm and, in her words, “are no longer the new museology” (795).

Indeed, a good example of this long overdue collaboration is right here, in the production of *Native Art of the Northwest Coast: A History of Changing Ideas*. Two of the book's editors, Jennifer Kramer and Ki-ke-in, are Aboriginal persons, as are other contributing writers, curators, and artists like Gloria Cranmer Webster, Marianne Nicolson, Douglas White, and Daisy Sewid-Smith. Nicholson demonstrates the ways in which the relationships between the ethnographers (as observers) and Native people (as subjects) have recently been reversed. In writing about the Nuu-chah-nulth artist and writer George Clutesi, White supplies the obvious reason that his great-uncle prudently did not oppose the potlatch in his public writings: "In 1947, participating in – or even merely encouraging someone to participate in – a potlatch was criminalized and prohibited as a statutory offence under Canada's federal Indian Act and had been since 1885" (633–34). In one of the most erudite essays in this volume, Jennifer Kramer explores the relationship between laws governing Indigenous property and the arts, be it the display and ownership of crest designs, the performance of songs and dances, or even the use and types of artistic techniques.

There are, however, some failures of perspective. Largely a product of social scientists and museum curators, and of artists and gallery curators, *Native Art of the Northwest Coast* lacks historical underpinning. Thus several writers exaggerate the novelty of the Vancouver Art Gallery's 1967 display of contemporary and historic Aboriginal art in the *Arts of the Raven: Masterworks by the Northwest Coast Indian*. Yet they might have been noted that, as early as 1941, the Vancouver Art Gallery showed contemporary and Native Art, borrowing works from the provincial museum in Victoria. Furthermore, acknowledging a second previous exhibition at the same

gallery would have strengthened the essays concerning the involvement of Native artists in the production and display of their work. For in 1953, Tsimshian Hatti Fergusson and Haida Ella Gladstone had organized – with the assistance of Bill Reid and Ellen Neel – the *Arts and Handicrafts Show*, comprised entirely of the work of contemporary Native artists.¹ Admittedly, the exhibition was a flop in the view of its Native organizers – attendance was low, there was no catalogue, and the sales were insignificant. Lamenting the lack of newspaper reviews, Hatti Fergusson pointedly told a gallery official: "Contrary to what most people think, Indians appreciate practical criticism."²

There are not only omissions here. Despite the authors' attempts to avoid making anachronistic value judgments, these nevertheless creep into the essays of even the best writers in this volume. Ronald Hawker assures us that the United Church minister George Raley's writings were shaped by the "unfortunate paternalism of the time" (380). Ira Jacknis, rather surprisingly in view of his own erudition, writes that "the first century of Euro-American contact with Northwest Coast art was partial and shallow" (54). In curator Scott Watson's view, Emily Carr's Native productions were simply "faux," and Alice Ravenhill, who ran the BC Indian Arts and Welfare Society in the late 1930s and early 1940s, belonged to "a group of 'do-gooders'" (351). All of these and

¹ Maria Tippett, *Bill Reid: The Making of an Indian* (Toronto: Random House, 2003), 80–85.

² Hatti Fergusson to J.A. Morris, 7 July 1954, Vancouver Art Gallery Archives, box 107.

other claims brashly reflect twenty-first century politically correct thinking rather than showing sensitivity to historical context.

One of the book's editors, Ki-ke-in (Ron Hamilton), perhaps deserves the last word. In his poem, "Box of Darkness," the Nuuchah-nulth artist tells non-Native museum and art gallery curators, anthropologists, photographers, and art historians: "You live and work in our graveyard / Picking the last remnants of flesh and blood / From my mother's bones" (517). First published in *BC Studies* in 1991, this "barbed critique" warned non-Native people associated with the production, display, and interpretation of Northwest Coast art to "Take your sweaty palm from my face" (515, 517). The essays and appended documents in *Native Art of the Northwest Coast* mark a beginning, a start. But the "sweaty palm" has not yet entirely disappeared.

*We Are Our Language: An
Ethnography of Language
Revitalization in a Northern
Athabaskan Community*

Barbra A. Meek

Tucson: University of Arizona Press,
2010. 232 pp. \$29.95 paper.

EWA CZAYKOWSKA-HIGGINS
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AS LAID OUT IN THE First Peoples' Cultural Council's *Report on the Status of BC First Nations Languages* (2010), since the 1800s, there has been "dramatic decline in the number of fluent speakers" of First Nations languages in British Columbia: as of 2010 only 5.1 percent of the population of BC First Nations are fluent speakers of their ancestral languages (5). This decline parallels drops

in numbers of speakers of Indigenous languages around the world.³ In response, Indigenous communities, supported by linguists, educators, language activists, and agencies such as UNESCO, are implementing efforts to maintain, reclaim, and revitalize their languages. Such efforts are frequently aligned with human rights movements attempting to reverse the effects of colonizing forces and/or discrimination. They can thus contribute, often significantly, to increasing people's sense of identity and connection to their land, to the health of individuals, and to their communities, cultures, and economies.

Academics and non-academics are increasingly considering what factors – historical, social, political, educational, cultural – play a role in language revitalization. Barbra Meek's *We Are Our Language*, an ethnographic account of revitalization efforts in the Kaska-speaking community in the Yukon between 1998 and 2008, is an important academic contribution to this area of inquiry and action. Its detailed description and discussion of the historical and contemporary context of Kaska language use provide an illuminating picture of the successes, value, and challenges of language revitalization efforts for Kaska specifically and for many other Indigenous languages more generally.

The primary purpose of Meek's book is "to show how the practice and ideologization of Kaska have influenced Kaska language revitalization" (x). The first chapter

³ See, for example, Nettle and Romaine 2000 and UNESCO's website on endangered languages.

presents the history of colonization in Canada pertaining to language shift, the history of language revitalization in the Yukon, and ways in which economic factors affect language use and reevaluation in Kaska-Dene communities. Chapter 2 focuses on the role of social environment in language revitalization; considers literature on, and theoretical background for, language revitalization, including work from linguistic anthropology and language socialization research; and points out the extent to which social, political, and ideological considerations affect the outcomes of language revitalization efforts. Chapter 3 turns to an extended illustration of Kaska language use and roles, especially among children, at home, in public institutions, and in classrooms. In Chapter 4, the documentation of language and the production of materials for language learning are considered, with particular attention to how language materials are presented and how this affects the use and valuing of Kaska, while Chapter 5 focuses on representations of language in programs and bureaucracies and considers how these affect revitalization goals. Chapter 6 concludes by asking how “we conceptualize language revitalization and success” (162).

Meek’s description and analysis centres on the notion of “disjunctures,” defined as “everyday points of discontinuity and contradiction – between social or linguistic groups, within discourses, practices or between them” (x). Her analysis raises crucial questions about gaps between the ideals of revitalization and its reality and, in the process, provides insight into ways of critically evaluating and transforming the “sociolinguistic landscape” (163).

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A Tsilhqút’ín Grammar

Eung-Do Cook

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013.

670 pp. \$165.00 cloth.

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EUNG-DO COOK’S (2013) *A Tsilhqút’ín Grammar* is the culmination of his research on the language, spanning forty years. It provides a very thorough, albeit quite technical, overview of Tsilhqút’ín linguistic structure.

Overall, the grammar is very well laid out: it begins with an introduction to existing Tsilhqút’ín research and to some of the most notable features of the language. The bulk of the grammar includes ten chapters covering phonology (Chapter 1), word classes (Chapter 2), verbal morphology (Chapters 3-4), syntax (Chapters 5-7), and a selection of more complex morpho-syntactic topics (Chapters 8-10). The grammar ends with three annotated texts. These provide a good sense

of how various structures and processes discussed in the grammar are realized in the language itself. It is a shame that the texts are not accompanied by audio recordings, which would have completed the grammar very nicely.

Cook's grammar is best suited to linguists already familiar with Athabaskan languages and interested in the linguistic nuts and bolts of the Tsilhqút'ín language. For example, Chapter 4 spans seventy-five pages on verb classes, including an extremely thorough discussion of morpheme co-occurrence restrictions within the verbal complex. This makes it a wonderful resource for linguists who are specializing in Athabaskan verbal morphology and who are comfortable with the terminology used to describe the Athabaskan verbal complex. For novice readers (e.g., community-based speakers with little formal linguistic training), Chapter 4 – and indeed the grammar more generally – would likely be somewhat overwhelming.

On a related note, the line is sometimes blurred between *description* of the facts and *analysis* of the facts. Cook himself is a phonologist, and, as a result, there is a strong focus on phonological (Chapter 1) and morpho-phonological (Chapter 3, §3.2) aspects of the language. Throughout the grammar, illustrative forms include both *underlying forms* (indicating morphological structure) and *surface forms* (indicating actual pronunciation), and a number of complex phonological derivations are provided to illustrate how one gets from the underlying to the surface form (e.g., 2.11 on page 187). This approach is very useful, at least for formally trained linguists, since the relationship between underlying and surface forms is often not transparent. However, it assumes a particular mechanism (*ordered rules*) within a particular theoretical framework (*rule-based*). A single mention is made (on page 195) of the possibility of analyzing the

data using a different (*constraint-based*) theoretical framework. Given the complexity of the derivations provided, one wonders whether an alternative analysis, under a different theoretical framework, might be possible, and what kinds of insights it might provide into the structure of the language.

Cook does not draw extensively on the Athabaskan literature in his grammar, as is reflected in the relatively short bibliography. For the purposes of comparison, reference is made primarily to Dëne Sųłiné, with which he is also familiar. This may well have been an intentional decision on Cook's part in order to keep the grammar a manageable size. Nonetheless, it is something to be aware of: readers interested in comparative Athabaskan linguistics will have to do their own research to see how Tsilhqút'ín linguistic structures compare to those in other related languages. One concrete consequence of this decision is that readers may be left with the impression that certain puzzles noted by Cook would not be puzzling in reference to other related languages. For example, in introducing the particles in § 2.9, Cook states: "The particles exemplified below (and many others not listed here) should be properly subclassified according to their grammatical functions when more is known about them. In the meantime, they are lumped together here" (122). Consideration of similar particles in other Athabaskan languages may well clarify how the Tsilhqút'ín particles presented in §2.9 should be categorized.

Finally, Cook is very forthcoming, in particular in Chapter 2, about variability (and change) in the forms that he has elicited from fluent

speakers, and he does not attempt to abstract away from this variability for the purpose of descriptive simplicity. This is refreshing, as it presents a very realistic view of the fluctuating state of the language and of the current state of Cook's understanding of the facts. It also provides ample scope for future research on the language in order to confirm that the illustrative forms provided throughout the grammar are (still) recognized as grammatical by fluent speakers and to further explore individual uses of the language's complex morpho-syntactic structure.⁴

In summary, Eung-Do Cook's *A Tsilhqút'ín Grammar* is a very impressive piece of work, documenting the complex linguistic structure of the Tsilhqút'ín language in great detail. It provides an excellent resource to linguists interested in furthering their understanding of Tsilhqút'ín (and other Athabaskan languages), and it is a very good basis on which to conduct further research on this wonderfully rich language.

Klallam Dictionary

Timothy Montler

Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012. 1008 pp. \$85.00 cloth.

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TIMOTHY MONTLER'S *Klallam Dictionary* is much more than a listing of words in Klallam and English. It is a beautiful, solid volume of information that has the potential to be useful to a wide range of people. Looking through it is fun. It provides detailed information about the meaning and structure of words, how sentences are formed, and the culture from which this Salish language has risen: it is the language of the Klallam people of Becher Bay on Vancouver Island and Washington State's Olympic Peninsula. The structure of the dictionary includes eighteen pages of front matter in addition to the 983 pages that make up the bulk of the work.

The front matter contains a breadth of information about how the dictionary came about and the speakers who shared their knowledge, and it ranges from the earliest documented records of the language to the present-day speakers. Lineages of the speakers are provided where known, which is useful for historians. After presenting information about "Contributing Native-Speaking Elders" (viii-x) comes "A Brief Introduction to the Klallam Language" (x-xiii). In this section, Montler describes the sounds of the language, word structure, and the basics of how sentences are constructed. While this is useful in terms of getting a

⁴ I know that questions have been raised within the Tsilhqút'ín-speaking community about the grammaticality of some of the illustrative forms provided in the grammar.

sense of how the language is structured, it seems directed at those who have some familiarity with Salish language structures. It includes a few example words to illustrate sounds as well as a few technical terms such as “reduplication,” “infixation,” and “metathesis.”

An essential section to read prior to delving into the dictionary itself is that on the “Organization of Entries” (xiv-xvi). Entries in the *Klallam Dictionary* contain a vast amount of information about each word, such as its root, the source elder’s initials, a grammatical analysis, illustrative example sentences, acceptable variant forms, and, in some cases, special cultural notes and reference to other entries. A detailed List of Abbreviations and References (xvi-xvii) concludes the front matter.

The Klallam-English dictionary is 543 pages long, with Klallam words arranged in alphabetical order and with a wealth of information about word structure in addition to English translations of Klallam concepts. An English-Klallam index (545-751) follows the dictionary, with an alphabetical listing of English concepts and a range of Klallam forms that express those concepts. An interesting feature of Klallam is that some concepts that are expressed in English with one word can be expressed in Klallam by what are referred to as lexical suffixes. For example, the concept “abdomen” is expressed by a word on its own (*ʔac*) and by two different lexical suffixes (= *iqən* and = *ankʷs*).

If readers want to learn more about the Klallam forms, they can look up entries for words in the Klallam-English section or the Klallam Affix Index (753-814).

There are three categories of affixes in Klallam – prefixes, suffixes, and lexical suffixes – which are each given a separate subsection in the affix index. This type of organization is quite informative, and it allows linguists interested in word structure to find all instances of a word

with a particular type of affix. In some cases, the entries are quite extensive. For example, the entry for *-tʰ* (“basic transitivizer”) lists over two thousand words that are formed with that suffix.

The final section of the dictionary contains the Klallam Root Index (815-983), listing all the words for each root in the language. This can be useful for linguists and language learners interested in knowing how concepts are related in Klallam. For example, the entry for *√qʷay* (“talk”) contains thirty-nine entries, with meanings ranging from “talking,” “language,” “telephone,” “manage to talk,” to “mind.”

In sum, the *Klallam Dictionary* goes beyond listing words and includes a wide range of information related to word structure. This book will be an excellent resource for a range of readers, from historians and language learners and teachers to linguists.

*Chinuk Wawa: Kakwa nsayka
ulman-tilixam łaska munk-
kəmtəks nsayka/As Our Elders
Teach Us to Speak It*

The Confederated Tribes of
Grande Ronde

Seattle: University of Washington
Press, 2012. 400 pp. \$29.95 paper.

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Spokane

IN AN OBSCURE 1978 dissertation, a linguist named Samuel Johnson demonstrated that most of the countless Chinook Jargon lexica compiled over two hundred years

form a few distinct lineages.⁵ Joining the ranks of definitive dictionaries identified by Johnson is this spectacular new lexicon of our historic Northwest intercultural language, published by the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde in Oregon who, uniquely, adopted “Chinuk Wawa” as their mother tongue in the nineteenth century.

How do you say *Alki*, Washington State’s Chinuk Wawa motto? We have long lacked reliable pronunciation guides to Chinook Jargon. It has been recorded following English spelling conventions, with the attendant ambiguities. The compilers of this new dictionary wisely recognize that most readers are literate in English, a language from which many Chinuk Wawa sounds are absent. Therefore they innovate, judiciously adding letters (t, q, x) for Aboriginal-derived sounds and adding accents to show a word’s main stress, a modification that hugely improves on anglophone practice. The net effect is to boldly transcend 150-year-old traditional spellings so that learners can finally pronounce confidently.

The compilers also banish another bane of Chinookology – bowdlerization. Surely delighting anyone who realizes this was and is an everyday language, words long absent from Chinuk Wawa dictionaries re-emerge here. This is done tastefully: multi-syllabic synonyms for body parts and functions serve as English translations.

The two centuries of Chinuk Wawa literature consists almost exclusively of word lists. (The main exception is a Chinuk Wawa trope in a distinct British Columbian alphabet, researched by this reviewer.) Contemplate anglophone students of French trying to use only a textbook’s vocabulary index to communicate in Quebec, and the violence this lexical approach does to any fluency in Chinuk Wawa becomes obvious. As well, some

astute presentation choices enhance the ability of *cheechakos* to understand this dictionary. A grammar sketch solidifies the prefatory matter, making this one of the first overt statements of the very real rules for speaking this pidgin/creole language well (30–51). Example phrases and sentences breathe life into every entry. The real coup de grâce is an enormous section of texts in the Chinuk Wawa of fluent elders (357–485). Nothing could more powerfully guide, and appropriately challenge, the learner than these mostly autobiographical glimpses into the life and history of the vibrant Chinook Jargon-speaking community at Grande Ronde, Oregon.

Any shortcomings in this monumental piece of Northwest scholarship are trivial compared to its huge achievements. One might wish for a marginally clearer statement of the orthography used (25), adding the forms “ng” and “z” and simplifying “dj” to the unused “j.” A linguist might note that “doubling” (reduplication, 44) as a grammatical device makes a predicate distributive and that the inanimate “it” has no Chinuk Wawa pronoun. Inexplicably, a few words are isolated at the end of the alphabet under the glottal-stop letter “ʔ”, when they are really vowel-initial (259–260, 304).

This dictionary is the finest resource in existence on Chinook Jargon. Readers who have long wished for a clear picture of what this well-known “trade language” was like, and for knowledge of the background of the many Chinuk Wawa words that have entered our region’s English, have now had their wishes granted. To paraphrase a comment I once heard in Victoria: “*Skookum* book, eh?”

⁵ Samuel V. Johnson, “Chinook Jargon: A Computer Assisted Analysis of Variation in an American Indian Pidgin” (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1978).

*Father Pandosy:
Pioneer of Faith in the Northwest*

Edmond Rivère,
translated by Lorin Card

Vancouver: Midtown Press, 2012.
176 pp. \$19.95 paper.

TIMOTHY P. FORAN
Canadian Museum of History

OVER THE COURSE of a ministry that spanned nearly half a century, Catholic missionary Jean-Charles Pandosy witnessed and participated in one of the most dramatic regional transformations in human history. Whereas in 1847 Pandosy described his mission field as a wilderness inhabited by *des sauvages*, four decades later he noted that the region had sprouted towns and cities teeming with *des hommes civilisés*; that its landscape had been reshaped through agriculture, logging, and road construction; and that its southern and northern parts had been integrated into the American and Canadian federations – the former as the State of Washington, the latter as the Province of British Columbia. Missionary involvement in this transformation has attracted scholarly attention since the publication of Vincent J. McNally’s *The Lord’s Distant Vineyard* in 2000, and now Edmond Rivère’s translated biography of Pandosy introduces a general readership to important aspects of this history.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of this biography is its revelation of the scope and complexity of missionary roles in the early development of Washington and British Columbia. Pandosy’s career extended far beyond the altar and the confessional: he worked variously as a farmer, an irrigator, a viticulturist, a carpenter, a teacher, a healthcare provider, a musician, a lexicographer, and an intermediary between Aboriginal groups and the

American government. Yet even as he fulfilled these roles, Pandosy expressed grave misgivings about the broader colonial project to which they contributed. He alienated settlers, government officials, and even his clerical superiors by criticizing their treatment of Aboriginal people, and his identification – assumed or ascribed – with Yakama political resistance prompted a contingent of the US Army to destroy his mission and to threaten him with lynching. His life story is thus an eloquent example of missionary ambivalence towards colonialism.

To relate this life story, Rivère draws primarily on letters and reports penned by Pandosy himself. These sources provide rich insight into the missionary’s professional and personal life, and Rivère quotes them at length throughout the biography. Regrettably, he is insufficiently critical of these sources and devotes little attention to their inherent biases, assumptions, and agendas. Although this tendency does not result in hagiographical eulogizing – Rivère strives for a warts-and-all portrait – it does have the effect of perpetuating a nineteenth-century missionary discourse about Aboriginal people. Hence, Pandosy’s early converts are described as inhabiting a “no man’s land” and are noted for their “material debauchery,” their “tendency to completely neglect basic hygiene,” and their ignorance of “the well-founded principles governing the rules for maintaining good health” (28, 44, 54). Compounding this problem is the awkwardness of a text that bears telltale signs of a hurried translation from the French original, first published in 2002 – overuse of the historical present, word-for-word

renderings of French idioms, and jarring references to the wisdom of “Cicero” and the pontificate of “Leon XIII.”

Despite these serious shortcomings, *Father Pandosy* is a first step in introducing a general English-speaking readership to a critical chapter in the history of the Pacific Northwest. It reveals a complex colonial process through the lens of a fascinating life story.

*Put That Damned Old
Mattock Away*

David J. Spalding

Pender Harbour: David J. Spalding,
2013. 195 pp. \$19.95 paper.

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IN *Put That Damned Old Mattock Away*, long-time Gulf Island resident David Spalding draws on oral histories, a variety of archival documents, and his grandfather’s delightfully written and illustrated diary (1914–32) to explore life on Pender Island between 1890 and 1940. His goal was to write a “history of the farm, with [his] Grandfather’s diaries and sketches as the principal focus,” with the goal of commemorating “[his] grandparents’ lives ... on South Pender Island, the farm they created and the family they raised” (xv). He succeeds not only in providing a detailed, often poignant portrait of their lives but also in painting a rich and detailed overview of the rhythms and textures of everyday life in settler British Columbia.

The book follows a roughly chronological framework, beginning with the birth in 1863 of Arthur Reed Spalding, the youngest of six children of a well-to-do mercantile family near London, England. Inspired by the idea of pioneer life and a love of nature,

he visited North America first in 1884, a trip during which, according to his daughter’s summary many decades later, “the New World had claimed him for its own” (8). Spalding details his grandfather’s move to Pender Island in 1886, where, with the help of a small but necessary allowance from his family back in England, he began establishing his 364 hectare farm. In 1888, Arthur met Lilius Mackay, who came from a family with long roots in the British Columbia fur trade and in the province’s Indigenous and colonial history. Chapters describe the slow growth of the farm and family in “the Early Years” (the 1890s) as well as its expansion in “the Middle Years” (between 1900 and 1910) as they emerged from pioneer conditions. We are provided with many details of daily life and labour for all family members on this mixed, semi-subsistence farm, so characteristic of the Canadian rural experience in the pre-Second World War period. A separate chapter is devoted to the never-ending, often dangerous process of “Clearing Land and Collecting Firewood.” Chapters 7 to 10 take a different chronological trajectory, providing sections on spring, summer, fall, and winter, with detailed descriptions of an era in which daily activities, most of which were focused directly or indirectly on the local environment of the world outdoors, were profoundly affected by the seasons. “The War Years” details the profound effect that the First World War had on British Columbia’s economy and society, as seen through the lens of one family’s intense experience of a conflict that was occurring half a world away. Lest readers get the impression that work consumed all of settlers’ lives, Spalding devotes a chapter to the

leisure activities of the family and Gulf Island communities. “Winding Down” returns to the chronological narrative of Spalding’s grandparents. “Years of Sorrow” details the illness and death of Arthur Spalding, along with that of other family and friends, and the difficulties that the Great Depression further imposed on the family at this time in its history. It also explains the book’s title.

It is the diary of Arthur Spalding that holds the book together. His diary entries frame and shape his grandson’s narrative, while his poems, his illustrations, and their humorous and insightful captions, give us perhaps the most vivid reflections on his experience of Pender Island and of those he loved. All in all, through the eyes of a remarkable, ordinary family, this book succeeds in animating the history of daily life in early southern British Columbia in an era so different from our own.

Home to the Nechako: The River and the Land

June Wood

Victoria: Heritage House, 2013.
176 pp. \$17.95 paper.

*A Trail of Two Telegraphs:
And Other Historic Tales of the
Bulkeley Valley and Beyond*

Jane Stevenson

Halfmoon Bay: Caitlin Press,
2013. 192 pp. \$26.95 paper.

*Pioneer Daughter: Footnotes
on a Life in Northern British
Columbia*

Vesta Foote Leslie Philpott

Prince George: Lake Shannon
Printing, 2013. 128 pp. \$20.00
paper.

JONATHAN SWAINGER
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THE RISKS INVOLVED in writing local history are many. Readers are frequently presented with celebratory accounts of the virtues of a community or region – accounts that offer little save for the claim that they somehow demonstrate local character. Such histories tend to dwell on local “firsts,” anomalies, setbacks, or achievements. Although this applies to far too many local histories, it should not be understood as a condemnation but, rather, as an observation on how often authors sell themselves short by failing to even

tentatively reflect on questions pertaining to what these histories can tell us about context, the endless variety of human experience, and the extent to which our communities are representations of larger stories and currents. To varying degrees, this is a timidity that these three books share.

June Wood's *Home to the Nechako* is a passionate and often thoughtful portrayal of the environmental history of the region straddling the Nechako River in north-central British Columbia. It is an account centred on the Kenney Dam construction in the early 1950s; the heavy-handed dispossession of the Cheslatta First Nation just hours ahead of the rising flood water; the ecological repercussions of reversing the Nechako in order to supply power generation for the Alcan (now Rio Tinto Alcan) smelter built near the "instant" community of Kitimat; the later and still ongoing fight against the Alcan Completion Project; the struggle to preserve and increase the dwindling white sturgeon stock in the river; and the pine beetle epidemic that swept through northern British Columbia in the late 1990s and for the decade that followed. More than the other two authors, Wood is aware that, beyond the geographic proximity to the Nechako River and its drainage basin, these events are linked by northern British Columbia's historic and contemporary provision of raw material to interests operating in an international marketplace. Be it hydroelectricity, timber, animal pelts, mineral resources, oil, or natural gas, northern British Columbia has, for over two hundred years, been a theatre for the playing out of such dramas. And, all too often, the legitimate concerns of local residents and their environment have been pushed to the margins in favour of outside agencies and their interests. This does not mean that Wood can be read as an unbowed opponent of development of every sort, but it does mean that she can

be read as implicitly asking whether a balanced view of development ought to include a more respectful accounting of its consequences for the local environment and the people who live there. It is a question that still resonates throughout northern British Columbia.

In her *A Trail of Two Telegraphs*, which brings together a series of articles previously published in *Northword Magazine*, Jane Stevenson relays a selection of intriguing stories about life in the west-central interior of British Columbia, which extends from Prince George to Prince Rupert. Ranging from Simon McGillivray's account dispatched from the confluence of the Skeena and Bulkley rivers in the summer of 1833, through the completion of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in 1914, to the work of Prince George-based photographer Wally West, and to the wildcat strike at Kitimat in 1976, Stevenson's stories provide engaging snapshots of how people and communities constructed their individual and collective senses of self in northern British Columbia. Here, too, we see the region portrayed as a testing ground, a land where one might start anew, a geographic or physical space to be endured if not conquered, a homeland for the region's original peoples, and a place where residents were regularly reminded of the thin margins and sometimes idiosyncratic meanings of success. As with Wood, one can recognize in Stevenson an individual consciously aware of the larger context, even if she chooses not to interpret its many possibilities. Rather, her goal is seemingly to tailor her vignettes to a reading public drawn to intriguing, amusing, or even bewildering anecdotes.

Still, Stevenson recognizes that, while these accounts of life in northern British Columbia often cast the region as a symbol or a quest, those who stayed and persisted in their own pursuit of the good life were responsible for transforming an ideal into a lived reality.

Finally, in Vesta Foote Leslie Philpott's *Pioneer Daughter* we are offered a personalized remembrance of growing up in northern British Columbia around Fraser Lake that, in its detail, underlines for readers the fact that the testing experiences of non-Native settlement in the region are not relics of a long forgotten past. The conditions on distant and often isolated farms, along with the equally challenging circumstances encountered in some of the small communities in the northern interior within the past seventy-five years, contribute to a chronicle not quickly forgotten. Observing that life was "hard" fails to adequately capture what "hard" meant, particularly to women whose lot was to keep the home fires burning through depression, war, and peace. That Philpott is an enthusiastic amateur historian shines through on every page, but even if this might cause some readers to turn away, she nonetheless offers us glimpses of the human experience – of extraordinary yet ordinary people who, even if they did not scan the horizon in search of a context within which to understand the hand they had been dealt, nonetheless played that hand in a manner that said something about the expectations of those living in a pioneering region.

Taken together and read within the evolving body of literature on northern British Columbia, these three books can point readers towards the question of how the region has reacted to and attempted to shape the world in which it developed over the course of the twentieth century. They expose readers to an assortment of intriguing, aggravating, and sometimes amusing histories that speak not only to

lives lived, opportunities pursued, and challenges answered but also to the growing realization among northern British Columbians that, if they fail to take up the task of writing their own histories, then others, whose interests may lie elsewhere, will do so for them.



This Day in Vancouver

Jesse Donaldson

Vancouver: Anvil Press, 2013.
416 pp. \$38.00 paper.*Seize the Time: Vancouver
Photographed, 1967-1974*Vladimir Keremidschieff. Af-
terword by Jamie ReidVancouver: New Star Books, 2013.
128 pp. \$24.00 paper.*Haunting Vancouver:
A Nearly True History*

Mike McCardell

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2013. 256 pp. \$32.95 paper.*Vancouver Was Awesome:
A Curious Pictorial History*

Lani Russwurm

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2013.
160 pp. \$24.95 paper.JOHN DOUGLAS BELSHAW
*Thompson Rivers University, Open
Learning*

THERE ARE SOME stories about Vancouver that bear retelling. Take the tale of Theodore Ludgate, an American capitalist in the lumber trade who arrived in the city around 1899 with a lease for the whole of Deadman's Island. He was intent on logging its stand of trees and establishing a mill there for the duration. City officials demurred as they had other plans for the islet in Coal Harbour. There was a confrontation between Ludgate and his employees, on the one side, and Mayor James Ford Garden and a platoon of

policemen, on the other. Poses were struck, fists were shaken, damage was done, and the whole business wound up in court. In the end, Ludgate won his appeal to the Privy Council and the island was completely denuded. No mill would ever rise on the site, however, and the few residents would be chased off for good.

Three of the four books before me cover this tempest and each does so in its own way. What's more, a fifth 2013 imprint on Vancouver history – Sean Kheraj's *Inventing Stanley Park* – examines it as well. Indeed, the Deadman's Island War has been a favourite of local historians for many years. Chuck Davis and Eric Nicol both related the story in their own respective ways years ago. It is a fact: these events happened. But as Pirandello points out (and I have E.H. Carr to thank for this reference), a fact is like a sack – it won't stand up unless you put something in it. How these three authors address the facts of the Ludgate Affair is, thus, illuminating.

For Jesse Donaldson, author of *This Day in Vancouver*, the arrest of Ludgate and his men on 25 April 1899 is outstanding for its newsworthiness. The affair is important to us precisely because it was important then. (And the tale is enriched by Donaldson's inclusion of comments by Ludgate's terrified wife.) Donaldson's collection covers 356 days' worth of events (sorry, no accommodation for leap years) and is driven by what dominated talk around the figurative water cooler. If it made it to the front page, it had a good chance of making it into *This Day*. Which is fair enough. These were the issues that stirred public interest, at least on the local level, and we certainly get a sense of

what newspaper editors felt would excite their readership and expand their sales. Whether Vancouverites obligingly joined in with a chorus of applause or jeers is seldom stated. That's not the point. Stories like these, when they happen, become the people's property and shape their sense of the city and their place within it.

By contrast, Lani Russwurm positions the logging of Deadman's Island within a longer narrative of conflict and mortality. From pre-contact-era mass executions and gravesites through Ludgate's axe-men to the occupation of the islet by the Canadian military, it comes across as a place where not much nice has happened. Russwurm, whose *Vancouver Was Awesome* arose from the historical research he contributed to the similarly named *Vancouver Is Awesome* website, is expert at pulling on one thread and showing how it connects to another. Deadman's Island is not one story: it is several. And the ability of so many of Vancouver's stories to reveal depth and breadth is what, one has to conclude, gives the city its awesomeness.

Mike McCardell's contribution to this discourse stands significantly apart from all others. The gimmick of this book is that the first-person narrator is a corporeal ghost, a sapper from beyond the grave with a passable complexion and a long-term interest in the Lower Mainland. He journeys about, chatting up historic figures, sharing historical experiences, and reporting on them. Mostly he does so in a voice that is far more millennial than Victorian. As to Ludgate ("a rotten guy") and Deadman's Island, McCardell stretches out the story over eight pages, drawing on Aboriginal accounts of its use as a deathscape, various newcomer plans for nineteenth-century Coal Harbour, the logging fiasco, its use as a smallpox quarantine station, and then the assignment of a military presence. McCardell doesn't scrimp on content but it is eclipsed by his style: this book

is an exercise in trying to make history interesting to an audience that requires entertainment to ease digestion. The effect is jarring. Surely there is no other history book freshly in print that uses the word "braves" to describe Aboriginal males and "OMG" to indicate surprise. I surely hope not. (And if you must write a tongue-in-cheek spectral history of Vancouver then please make room for Ghost-Buster's Towing.)

To demonstrate how academic or scholarly history handles the same topics, Kheraj's recent monograph provides a helpful example. He's writing from the perspective of environmental concerns. For Kheraj, what happens at Deadman's Island in 1899 is indicative of ongoing tensions between city and wilderness, nature and nurture, resources and recreation. Value systems in conflict are played out in Stanley Park, the touchstone of the Vancouverite identity. *Inventing* (enough with the gerunds already, UBC Press) is richly theoretical and nuanced, but it is not where Vancouverites will go if they are looking for an interesting tale about their town.

Indeed, local histories serve a variety of audiences and purposes, which is why they are so delightfully diverse in their approaches and so distinct from the academic variety. They offer access points – visual stimulation, a reminiscent tone, a note of celebration, an authoritative voice, the development of a tiny detail that will appeal to a niche demographic the existence of which few suspected – in a manner that is neither the purpose nor bailiwick of most scholarly work.

We learn as much about a city from the purported audiences of "popular" histories as we do from the histories

themselves. For example, if we recall Alan Morley's 1961 *Milltown to Metropolis* or Eric Nicol's 1970 *Vancouver*, the tone of both is boosterist and the theme is maturation from troubling adolescence into manly or womanly adulthood. Both are vindications of the visions articulated by the city's founders. Is it unfair to say that this is what the city needed at the time? Morley was writing when local economic expansion was finally escaping the gravitational pull of the Depression and the war years; by Nicol's day, those darker memories were fading and one could begin entertaining lofty notions of "destiny." Too, these authors were writing guidebooks for a rapidly expanding population, one made up very heavily of newcomers from postwar Europe and post-dustbowl Prairies. At the same time, *Vancouver* and *Milltown* capture the scriptural high ground for a largely bourgeois city in which growth was good, the CCF/NDP was mostly bad, the town's rough-and-tumble days largely behind it (and therefore safe to wink at now), and its future safe in the hands of the Kerrisdalean establishment.

To get a sense of how much this has changed, one has only to pick up a copy of Vladimir Keremidschieff's *Seize the Time*. This is the latest local reflection on the 1960s and early 1970s. While Nicol was grinding out columns at the *Province*, Keremidschieff was capturing the news on film for the *Sun*. Nicol was looking back at a glorious past while Keremidschieff was boldly throwing himself into the crowds and marches that demanded a better future. Keremidschieff's Vancouverites – certainly those on these pages – are young and not very impressed with what the city had accomplished. The book's photographs are not consistently well presented, nor are the captions always legible, but it comes with a remarkably good afterword by Jamie Reid. The poet/activist and contemporary of Keremidschieff observes of the photographs: "One feels

the dominance of brown and grey – of damp Vancouver skies rather than summer sunshine. Those who never witnessed and experienced the events recorded by Vladimir's Pentax will probably see them as a kind of sepia representation of their parents' history and life. Those who were present will be seeking tokens of remembrance" (120). Just as every generation gets its own "gap," it is also entitled to its own nostalgia. To quote Reid once more: "The survivors of the sixties protest movements ... might well now be asking how much their idealism, effort and sacrifice has actually accomplished in terms of effecting positive social change over the past half-century" (120). There is something smug about this comment that wants underlining: most generations feel that, in their youth if not at some other time, they had hoped to create a better world, whether one in which there is no Third Reich or one in which no interior towns are without electricity. The baby boomers never had a monopoly on hope, whatever arrogant claims were made at the time or since. Having said that, this collection of photographs of placards, politicians, and pop stars will rouse memories and stimulate conversations among people who may see in it proof that History with a capital "H" is not just something that involves *other people*.

Indeed, the Donaldson and Russwurm compendia and even the McCardell ghost-narrative contribute something similar in this regard. History, as these four authors present it, is something in which everyone has a place and a role, or at least an entry point. No surprise on that front, perhaps. Not so long ago everything that wasn't politics

was trivia to historians. Keremidschieff's very intense young protesters of the sixties shout (perhaps chant) this out on every page. Now that big league politics itself has descended into parody, other topics move to the forefront, jostling for the attention they possibly deserved all along. A generation nourished on a diet of discomfiting disclosures of abuse of children and metropolitan/senatorial kleptocracies, one that sees through shopworn phrases like "national interest" and eschews the ballot box for the blog is more likely to attend to stories that don't easily fit into a bankrupt master narrative. McCardell's ghost-writer is an everyman who takes people pretty much as he finds them, and mostly they're a collection of yutzes. A few are gold-plated or at least bronzed but not to the extent that they are elevated far above the wet Vancouver pavement. Russwurm's *Vancouver* is special because its people do special things. They are individually extraordinary. The can-you-believe-it? quality of *This Day* similarly hands the reader an opportunity to say, "There are 365 stories in the Terminal City. This is one of them..." In short, it lays claim to a historical vitality that stands comparison with any burg.

That's what you get for being a World Class City. It invites opportunities to celebrate many things but it also demands that the city shows some character. Or characters. The English television personality and former Squeeze front man, Jools Holland, returned home from Expo '86 and quipped: "Vancouver is a city without a soul." In these four books we find something of a reply to that canard.

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Flight Was in His Spirit: The Life of Harry Burfield

Marion Ann Burfield

Kamloops: Rikkur Publishing,
2012.
167 pp. \$29.95 paper.

First Tracks: The History of Skiing in Revelstoke

Revelstoke Museum and
Archives

Revelstoke: Revelstoke Museum
and Archives, 2012. 203 pp.
\$45.00 cloth.

First Tracks: Whistler's Early History

Florence Petersen

Whistler: Whistler Museum and
Archives Society, 2012. 205 pp.
\$20.00 paper.

DAVID A. ROSSITER

Western Washington University

STUDENTS OF BRITISH Columbia's past who wish to explore histories of outdoor recreation in the province are faced with a rather thin scholarly literature. A 2011 special issue of *BC Studies* on park history, edited by Ben Bradley and Jenny Clayton, and Mark Stoddart's *Making Meaning of Mountains* (2012), provide points of entry into a vast and fascinating topic but leave readers looking for more. While academic attention has not yet been sufficiently stirred to create a wide-ranging scholarly treatment, amateur local historians such as Stephen Vogler (for Whistler) and Francis Mansbridge (for Hollyburn)

have stepped in to fill a void and provide detailed and intimate portrayals of places and peoples shaped by the pursuit of recreation in the province's varied and rugged terrain. Three such works published in 2012 illuminate key aspects of the history of skiing in British Columbia: Marion Ann Burfield's memorial treatment of her famous father, champion skier Harry Burfield; a history of skiing around Revelstoke published by that city's museum and archives; and Florence Petersen's detailed account of the peoples and activities at the settlement of Alta Lake prior to its transformation into the resort municipality of Whistler beginning in the 1960s. Although each book focuses on its immediate subject, taken together they suggest common themes around which a more robust academic literature on the history of skiing in British Columbia might be developed.

Marion Ann Burfield's volume, dedicated to her late father Harry, details the influence the champion skier had upon the development of the resort landscapes of the ski industry in British Columbia. Born in Revelstoke in 1915 to parents involved with railway operations, Burfield moved around the province several times throughout his life, following first his parents and then later opportunities offered by mountains and snow. In the early 1930s in Nelson, he took up alpine racing and ski-jumping and experienced considerable success at competitions throughout British Columbia and the US Pacific Northwest. Then, for two decades following the Second World War, Burfield and his young family occupied a prominent role in the development of the Hollyburn Ridge area above West Vancouver as owners and operators of the Hollyburn Lodge (now part of Cypress Mountain Resort). By the mid-1960s, the Burfield family had moved to the Kamloops area to participate in the development of skiing at Tod Mountain (now Sun Peaks Resort). Until the time of

his accidental death in 1971, Burfield spent all of his energies either on his skis or in efforts to get others outside and sliding on snow. To present this story, Marion Burfield chose a coffee-table-style book, with text captions contextualizing reproduced archival material such as letters, photographs, race results sheets, and newspaper clippings. The overall effect is attractive and accessible, although the heavy reliance on the presentation of primary materials leaves much interpretive responsibility with the reader. A benefit of this style of presentation, however, is that it rewards a close reading, particularly by those with some knowledge of the broader history of skiing in British Columbia. For, while this book is clearly about Harry Burfield, the materials used to tell his story show that his exploits and enterprises intersected with many of the people and places key to this history.

One such place is Revelstoke, Burfield's birthplace and site of several of his successes on skis. With *First Tracks: The History of Skiing in Revelstoke*, the Revelstoke Museum and Archives has provided an accessible and attractive overview of a century of skiing in and around the mountain town on the edge of the Columbia River. From Scandinavian immigrants on "Norwegian snowshoes" in the 1890s, through the ski-jumping craze of the 1920s and 1930s, to the rise of alpine skiing in the years following the Second World War, this volume demonstrates that skiing provided a steady recreational outlet for the working-class citizens of a town more well known for its role in the mining and rail industries. It also highlights the role of Revelstoke as

a ski destination to which “ski trains” from Vancouver travelled for competitions and other events during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. While its status as a destination faded in the late 1960s, due in part to the rise of Whistler, which provided people in metropolitan Vancouver with an easily accessible mountain resort, local skiers carried on and worked to keep ski operations financed. Interestingly, this volume has been published as Revelstoke has once again become a destination with the opening of the extra-locally financed Revelstoke Mountain mega-resort.

While Burfield’s biography and the Revelstoke account both deal with the foundational role of skiing in shaping people and place, Florence Petersen’s *First Tracks: Whistler’s Early History* addresses the half-century of non-ski activity that took place around Alta Lake prior to the formation of the Garibaldi Lift Company and the advent of the ski resort of Whistler Mountain in the 1960s. As such, Petersen’s volume explicitly addresses a topic that the first two volumes considered in this review only imply: ski landscapes, and the people who created them, were frequently in some sort of relationship with those involved in natural resource extraction or land development work. The most detailed and least glossy of the three books, *First Tracks* begins by meticulously tracing the lives and spaces of the early trappers, miners, loggers, and small-scale farmers who connected the valley around Alta Lake to the settler societies and economies of the Lower Mainland in the first decades of the twentieth century. Petersen then moves on to tell the story of the many fishing resorts opened around the lake and valley from the 1920s through to the 1950s as well as, beginning in the 1930s, the arrival of Vancouverites looking for summer “getaway” properties. Through her narrative, then, Petersen exposes the gradual evolution of land use over a half century: a remote valley known mainly

by First Nations, prospectors, and trappers in 1900 came increasingly into the orbit of metropolitan Vancouver as transportation links and middle-class affluence (among a host of other reasons) drove the early settlement of Alta Lake into the recesses of time and made way for the international destination resort of Whistler.

Whistler might be considered the present apex of the development of skiing in British Columbia. However, beneath that peak lies a lot of bedrock waiting to be exposed. While each book reviewed here has a different subject of immediate focus, taken together they suggest at least three themes that might be pursued by scholars interested in undertaking the excavation. First, Burfield’s story (reinforced by the Revelstoke volume) highlights the interconnected nature of ski development across the province: people, organizations, and events connected disparate and distant places. Second, all three books highlight relationships between urban spaces and ski landscapes: urban connections to sites of skiing are clear in these accounts. Larger towns and cities provided skiers, ideas, materials, or financing. Finally, the histories considered here are largely local and regional in nature: they are stories of development undertaken largely for the benefit of local and regional citizens. However, each of the main ski operations highlighted in these volumes has become strongly international, either in ownership or the make-up of skier visits, as we have moved into the twenty-first century. These common themes demonstrate that the very valuable local histories that have been produced over the

last few decades could be drawn together into a scholarly study (or a series of them) that enables us, in our efforts to understand the development of society and environment in British Columbia, to place our consideration of recreational land use on an equal footing with our consideration of resource industries such as forestry and mining.

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*Encounters in Avalanche Country:
A History of Survival in the
Mountain West, 1820-1920*

Diana L. Di Stefano

Seattle: University of Washington
Press, 2013. 192 pp. \$34.95 cloth.

HEATHER LONGWORTH

Fort St. John North Peace Museum

WINTER IN THE WESTERN mountains of Canada and the United States is a challenging time of year. *Encounters in Avalanche Country* provides insight into the experiences of the trappers, miners, railway employees, and communities that coped with avalanches. Studying a period of time when various industries brought settlers to the mountains, Diana L. Di

Stefano examines the relationships between these people and their environment, specifically through their participation in the fur trade, mining, and the railways.

Di Stefano argues that the threat of avalanches compelled workers and mountain communities to develop knowledge about how and where slides occur, to share strategies of avoiding avalanches with newcomers, and to band together when tragedy struck. Using a vast array of personal accounts, newspapers, and court cases, Di Stefano also shows that ideas of risk and responsibility changed as mines and railways increasingly industrialized the mountain regions. When victims of slides challenged corporations' claims that they had no legal liability, it became clear that the law lagged behind changing industrial relationships. Though the early court cases ultimately ruled in favour of railway companies, they eventually led to workmen's compensation laws.

For much of this book, the Canadian side of the story is an afterthought. There are brief mentions of British Columbia in the chapters on the fur trade and mining, but it is not until the experiences of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) near Revelstoke that Di Stefano incorporates an in-depth analysis of primary sources from north of the border. She expertly analyzes the 1889 and 1910 avalanches in Rogers Pass and their aftermath but barely mentions what a poor choice this pass was in the first place – a costly decision that plagued the CPR with avalanches for the first thirty years of operation.

Surveyors like Sanford Fleming proposed the Yellowhead Pass through the Rocky Mountains, a route that

had moderate curves and grades. Both the Canadian Northern Railway and the Grand Trunk Pacific later took this pass. Major Rogers knew of the problems of avalanches in the pass that bears his name when he investigated the route and even went so far as to suggest tunnelling under it. However, the CPR opted for Rogers's route because it was one hundred and sixty kilometres shorter, near the American border (and so would cut off American competition), and could be built quickly at low cost. The CPR paid the price for taking this shortcut with costly avalanches, expensive snowsheds, and, eventually, the very pricey Connaught Tunnel, which was completed in 1916. Set in this context, the questions of liability for the 1910 Rogers Pass avalanche are all the more compelling.

Encounters in Avalanche Country is a thoughtful and well-written addition to the environmental history of the western mountain ranges of North America. It provides us with an interesting examination of the relationship between humans and their environment at a time when "natural" disasters are again coming to the fore owing to human-caused climate change.

*Milk Spills and One-Log Loads:
Memories of a Pioneer Truck Driver*

Frank White

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing,
2013. 256 pp. \$32.95 cloth.

PATRICK CRAIB
Victoria

Milk Spills and One-Log Loads is the first of two autobiographical volumes relating the life of Frank White, one of the early fixtures of British Columbia's independent trucking industry. Profanity and profundity are laid out in equal measure, resulting in an entirely enjoyable

and insightful memoir.

The book covers White's early family years and his part in the emerging milk-trucking business in and around Abbotsford during the Depression – a path that ended in his retirement from contract truck logging at the tail end of the Second World War. With the deft editorial touch of his son Howard White, the author's distinctively affable conversational tone is set centre stage. Veterans of *The Raincoast Chronicles*, particularly those who remember Frank White's "The Way It Was with Trucks" (1974), will find much here to their taste.

Milk Spills fits into the niche known as the regional press working-class memoir, a genre that celebrates the rough and independent spirit. Embodied by a rough and savvy businessperson of one stripe or another – a genre exemplified by Gordon Gibson and Carol Rennison's *Bull of the Woods* (1980) – these rugged individuals survive by grace of wit and good humour, navigating emerging industries on the edges of civilized society. As White details, with the emergence of affordable trucks, transportation industries premised upon the railway were destabilized and allowed the canny – if occasionally underhanded – upstart to break into a previously established business before being squeezed out by the big money and their own bigger hubris. White's own business and social associations with free-wheeling frontier characters comes with a price as he ends up shouldering much of the risk and work, providing the book's dramatic tension.

While the romantic image of the independent operator is a frequent trope of rough memoirs, this folksy retelling of the pratfalls

of trucking culture is more than just an extended reminiscence. *Milk Spills* is unique for how cannily White interprets the often exploitative relationships and unforeseen consequences stemming from independent life. Whether employed or independent, operators like White worked on the margins, eking out a living on vague promises and handshake deals, and often as not came out behind. The author possesses a refreshingly sarcastic attitude towards these “good old bad old days,” and he relates stories of screwing-and-being-screwed with a certain playful ruefulness.

Aside from the conclusion of the book, which, while thematically appropriate, brings it screeching to a disorienting halt, there is little worth complaining about here. *Milk Spills* has no pretensions either to absolute fact or to exclusivity of experience, and it is wonderfully written. White has gifted us with a colourful contribution to our industrial heritage and a damned fine read, one that ought to be of interest to academics, grouching old-timers, and the wider public alike.



*The Wired Northwest:
The History of Electric Power,
1870s-1970s*

Paul W. Hirt

Lawrence, KS: University of
Kansas Press, 2012. 461 pp.
\$49.95 cloth.

*Water without Borders?
Canada, the United States, and
Shared Waters*

Emma S. Norman, Alice
Cohen, and Karen Bakker,
editors

Toronto: University of Toronto
Press, 2013. 275 pp. \$32.95 paper.

*The Columbia River Treaty
Revisited: Transboundary
River Governance in the
Face of Uncertainty*

Barbara Cosens, editor

Corvallis, OR: University of
Oregon Press, 2012. 453 pp.
\$29.95 paper.

MEG STANLEY
Parks Canada, Calgary

THESE THREE BOOKS are bound together by their examination of water as a managed transboundary resource. The first is a narrative history in monograph form. The other two are meaty collections of essays that address history and contemporary policy issues.

Paul Hirt's *The Wired Northwest: The History of Electric Power, 1870s-1970s*

is a chronological history of electrical power utility development in the Pacific Northwest, including Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and British Columbia from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth centuries. In *Water without Borders: Canada, the United States, and Shared Waters*, editors Emma Norman, Alice Cohen, and Karen Bakker present twelve essays on the Canada-United States Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. The essays are divided into two parts: "Issues, Approaches, and Challenges," and "Flashpoints, Conflicts, and Co-operation," which are bookended with an introduction and conclusion. The third volume, *The Columbia River Treaty Revisited: Transboundary River Governance in the Face of Uncertainty*, edited by Barbara Cosens, focuses on the past and future of the Columbia River Treaty. Its twenty-one essays explore four themes: "The 1964 Treaty and Changing Voices since 1964," "Changes Informed by Science," "Rethinking the Columbia River Treaty," and "Governing Transboundary Resources in the Face of Uncertainty." This volume also includes an introduction and a copy of the treaty for ready reference. All three books are indexed and well documented.

British Columbians will be especially interested in these books because the future of the Columbia River Treaty is currently being reviewed by the relevant authorities on both sides of the border. When it was drafted, the treaty made provision for flood control and power generation benefits; it came into force in 1964 following Canada-US and then British Columbia-Canada negotiations. Under the treaty, in 2014 the parties can give ten years' notice to terminate it, and 2014 is the first opportunity to revisit the treaty since its signing. So far, British Columbia has indicated a desire to work within the context of the existing treaty to modernize management of the river. In the United States, regional consultations have produced a recommendation to the State Department

to modernize the treaty, but the State Department has not yet announced how it wants to proceed. If the treaty is cancelled and renegotiation is not successful, then the Boundary Waters Treaty, 1909, will – with some exceptions – once again govern future management of the Columbia River. Regardless of what happens, British Columbia, which is responsible for administering the treaty on the Canadian side, is required to provide flood control for the life of its facilities on the river.

In a field previously dominated by narrower and often institutionally or river-based studies, Hirt's *The Wired Northwest* provides a detailed and nuanced history of power systems in the continental northwest and, in the process, provides insights into how, within a capitalist/democratic context, a blended public-private power system has evolved. This is neither a declensionist nor a triumphalist narrative: those looking for uncritical affirmation of a particular perspective will not find it here. Readers familiar with H.V. Nelles's *The Politics of Development* (1974) or Matthew Evenden's *Fish vs. Power* (2004) will find Hirt's approach familiar. While the Columbia River Treaty is not Hirt's focus, he provides a framework for understanding it and its place in the history of the regional power system.

Hirt very effectively builds on an expanding environmental history literature, showing us how the institutions that built Richard White's "Organic Machine" were created in the northwest. One word that Hirt is not afraid of is "progress," and, in his conclusion, he addresses the changing meaning of progress within the context of the development of the northwest's power systems. In

this way he points to the effect of changing values on how the system's "success" is judged.

The current discussion around the future of the Columbia River Treaty tends to focus on changes to environmental values. There is less discussion of change, or lack of change, in questions of finance. In this context, one of the more thought-provoking insights Hirt offers is that widespread support for power system development in the northwest fell apart in the 1970s and 1980s not only because of rising environmental awareness but also as a consequence of dissatisfaction with increasing rates and declining profits. In Hirt's narrative, these factors and others contributed to the re-examination and restructuring of the system. Will the treaty's restructuring likewise be informed by seemingly contradictory forces? In the end, what Hirt offers are insights into how an immensely complex system has evolved and changed – sometimes successfully and sometimes not.

One of Hirt's stated ambitions is to write a regional history that includes British Columbia as well as the US Pacific Northwest. The idea is admirable and offers tremendous potential for extending such a transnational analytical reach to questions related to the impact of differing governance structures and economies within the broad frame of the two neighbouring democratic/capitalist states. As with any ambitious project, this one is not perfectly executed; there are factual errors and omissions – for example, Hirt (350) lists Revelstoke incorrectly as a Treaty Dam. Moreover, Hirt's Canadian analysis relies too heavily on a limited range of published sources. Apart from his broadly applicable conceptual insights, Hirt's achievement in *The Wired Northwest* for the Canadian reader lies in his detailed synthesis and careful analysis of power utility developments south of the border, a narrative that is often weakly understood in Canada. One can only hope that future writing about

Canadian power systems, especially British Columbia's, will benefit from the ready access to the literature Hirt has furnished.

For Hirt, the past is the prologue: for the essay contributors in Cosens (*Columbia River Treaty Revisited*) and Norman et al. (*Water without Borders?*) for the most part the past is important background that is deployed with varying nuance. Cosens's collection contains more historically focused essays than does Norman et al.'s. In a well-written introduction, Cosens lays out the contours of the theme of "uncertainty" in the context of the Columbia River Treaty. The question lying at the heart of Cosens's essays is how to define and achieve efficiency and equity on the river in the face of changing values, legal circumstances, and scientific knowledge. In more accessible language, this means how to include environment, salmon, Aboriginal rights, climate change, power needs, and local communities in an international agreement. For the most part the focus is on the Columbia Basin, but the essays in the section on governance look inward as well as outward for models. Some authors argue that the treaty is a model agreement that has delivered remarkable returns to the region (variously defined); others disagree. John Shurt's lengthy analysis of the future of the treaty is an especially good summary of the questions explored in the essays and of the diversity of perspectives likely to animate discussions regarding the treaty on both sides of the border. Anyone interested in the Columbia River Treaty and the future of the Columbia River should read it.

In the final collection of essays, *Water without Borders?* editors Norman, Cohen, and Bakker cast

a wider net than do Hirt or Cosens to explore the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty between Canada and the United States. Their focus is on exploring “new forms of water governance that are not constrained by geopolitical boundaries” (15) and documenting the demise of “old models” (11) that are inappropriately scaled and that do not adequately address important contemporary issues. There is an undeniable idealism (and hence appeal) to the editors’ concluding argument in favour of a paradigm shift “that departs from the fragmented policies generated by geopolitical boundaries to strategic, integrated shared water governance models” (256).

The tension between the idealism and reality, as described in the various essays, is part of what is interesting about this collection, but it is also part of what makes *Water without Borders?* a bit frustrating. As the case studies and the essays document, and as the editors acknowledge in the conclusion, reality is always messier and more complex than the application of ideals. And, in the end, what is really compelling in the case studies are the diverse ways that cross-border water management has evolved both inside and outside the boundaries of the existing treaty. For those interested in the future of the Columbia River Treaty, the essays on the efforts of the International Joint Commission to reinvent itself as an expert body that integrates local knowledge much more systematically into its work is especially stimulating. Likewise, the failures at Devils Lake, where the treaty has not been invoked, illustrate how local interests can be limiting rather than empowering. One of the more engaging aspects of this book, which sets it apart from the other two, is its approach to cross-border content. Instead of leaving individual Americans and Canadians to understand the cross-border perspective and history as best they can, or to focus

exclusively on a particular point of view or story (as with a number of the essays presented by Cosens), the editors asked experts from both sides of the border to contribute articles on “flashpoints.” The result is a nuanced presentation of perspectives from both sides.

These books illustrate the fascinating and dynamic nature of the past and present of transborder water management. The “old” treaties offer up possibilities as well as problems. Whether they are antiquities to be cherished and carefully rehabilitated or junk to be cast aside in favour of new tools is a question for the present and the future.

*Fishing the Coast:
A Life on the Water*

Don Pepper

Madeira Park: Harbour
Publishing, 2013. 224 pp.
\$24.95 paper.

KENNETH CAMPBELL
Victoria

THERE ARE NO BOOKS on how to catch fish for a living,” writes Don Pepper in his preface to *Fishing the Coast*. “None” (10). What might seem a bold statement is, upon examination, accurate. In the numerous books about commercial fishing in British Columbia, not one author sets out to fully describe the processes and skills used to harvest salmon and other species. Many illustrate the techniques and equipment used to catch fish, but Pepper goes beyond the gear to reveal the local ecological knowledge learned on the fishing grounds.

In the past, the stories in Pepper's narrative might only have been heard on the docks or around the galley table. However, as Pepper notes in his acknowledgment to the skippers with whom he worked, he is "not apprehensive about revealing their knowledge and secrets, as their time and their fisheries (and mine) are now long past" (217). For much of his early fishing life, Pepper was beach man on a number of seine boats. But his other careers, including economist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and executive director of the Canadian Pacific Sardine Association, bring an added insight to his personal narrative. Central to the stories are the geographical variations that affect fish behaviour and, consequently, fishing behaviour. The stories are set in particular locales, reflecting Pepper's experiences, such as fishing the Nimpkish dog salmon in the strong tides of Johnstone Strait in 1953, making a curious set at Koeve River in 1956 and repeating it forty-five years later, or seining roe herring among the tricky Foote Islands of Spiller Channel in the 1980s.

In a salmon fishing career spanning the 1940s into the 1970s, Pepper witnessed major technological changes, particularly the transition from table seining through the puretic power block to the advent of the drum seine. A detailed chapter on building a seine net in 1953 reveals the depth of skill and knowledge required for a successful fishery. Pepper also demonstrates some of the unwritten rules followed on the seine boat fishing grounds, such as taking turns making a set and the length of time allowed before closing up.

Of particular interest is the description of the highly competitive "Blue Line" fishery at the entrance to Juan de Fuca Strait. From the 1960s into the 1990s, only the elite fisher vied for lucrative sets along the Bonilla-Tatoosh fishing boundary, otherwise known as the Blue Line. It took skill, preparation, and some conniving to

acquire a set as close to the line as possible. Pepper recounts his Blue Line experiences in the 1980s when he was fishing with his life-long friend and fishing partner Byron Wright aboard his vessel *Prosperity*. In the final chapter, this personal connection focuses the book on 2004, when the *Prosperity* and the old crew made one last voyage in search of sardines in a memorable trip that ended up circumnavigating Vancouver Island.

Fishing the Coast has an index and is fully illustrated with photographs and drawings of boats, nets, and logbooks. Charts and maps allow the reader to locate the narratives. Pepper's interest in the importance of local knowledge, along with the technological changes that occurred in the postwar salmon fisheries, make this a significant contribution to the history of commercial fishing on British Columbia's coast.

Railway Rock Gang

Gary Sim

Vancouver: Sim Publishing, 2013.
196 pp. \$99.98 cloth.

ROBERT D. TURNER

Royal British Columbia Museum

GARY SIM WORKED for BC Rail rock gangs from 1978 until 1987. He gained first-hand experience of many facets of railway operations and maintenance that formed the gangs' day-to-day work: blasting, tree falling, rock drilling and scaling, using heavy equipment, and rigging massive blocks and tackles.

This was hard, physical work, often undertaken in the most difficult of

circumstances and extremes of weather. Rockslides, derailments, mudflows, floods, and slumping slopes seldom happen on beautiful spring afternoons; usually they follow heavy rains, snowstorms, or other extreme weather events, and often in bone-chilling cold or exhausting August heat. Yet the BC Rail rock gangs attained a remarkable safety record, achieving 69,840 person-hours in six years without a lost-time injury. This achievement earned them the BC Safety Council Gold Medal in 1986, reflecting professionalism and great attention to detail and safety.

BC Rail was a well-run organization with a highly skilled and experienced workforce. Moreover, the railway's personnel knew that the day-to-day operation of the railway was important. As Sim notes, "what made it all worthwhile was being one of the team of people who kept the track open. The railway is of immense importance to the interior of BC. If the trains are rolling, a huge swath of interior of BC is 'business as usual'" (10).

The railways are still predominantly a place of male workers, and in jobs such as those undertaken by the rock gangs, those involved are often younger men working under experienced foremen, such as Fred Hunter (to whom the book is dedicated) and Mel Tutush, who oversaw the work and made sure the men got home. The railway depended on them, but most of us seldom appreciated their contributions or just how challenging their work could be.

Gary Sim worked along the steep slopes of the Coast Mountains, on the dry interior route to Kelly Lake, and also on the railway line to Tumbler Ridge in northeast British Columbia. He recounts many projects and incidents and the routines and challenges involved. Some jobs were unexpected, such as the salvage of three wrecked locomotives in the Cheakamus Canyon in 1986 (9-31).

Railway maintenance of way work developed its own specialized vocabulary. The book includes a lengthy glossary (115-

84), including a fascinating variety of technical terms, slang, place names, and some tongue-in-cheek references such as "blackfly" or "wasp." It includes more than just definitions, and it adds depth and interest to incidents and general background to working on the railway.

All of the photos are by the author, as are the drawings and paintings, which are included throughout the book. For the author, taking photos was a secondary concern because he was fully occupied with the work at hand. Nonetheless, the photographic record is surprising and insightful. The book is nicely printed with clear text and with good reproduction. Technical references and an index complete the volume.

I am very pleased to see this account by Gary Sim of his work with BC Rail. The writing is articulate, enjoyable, and interesting, and it provides a detailed insight into the day-to-day work essential to running a railway transportation system. The book is a welcome contribution to the history of BC Rail and, more generally, to our understanding of the work that is carried out in British Columbia beyond the limelight and outside of urban centres.



*Mac-Pap: Memoir of a Canadian
in the
Spanish Civil War*

Ronald Liversedge, edited by
David Yorke

Vancouver: New Star Books, 2013.
224 pp. \$19.00 paper.

TODD MCCALLUM
Dalhousie University

IFIRST READ *Mac-Pap: Memoir of a Canadian in the Spanish Civil War* in manuscript form thanks to the invaluable labour-related holdings of the Special Collections Division at the University of British Columbia Library. While I don't think it is of the same quality as Liversedge's earlier *Recollections of the On to Ottawa Trek* (Montreal, 1973), I remain haunted by a sentence in its conclusion: "I am equally certain that each [Mac-Pap] thought of the experience as the one really clean and noble thing in his life" (159).

The significance of this volume lies in several registers. Worthy of first mention is the truly impressive contextual material provided by editor David Yorke and New Star Books. Most of the Mac-Paps – members of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion who fought on the anti-fascist Republican side in the Spanish Civil War – and their supporters took part in numerous political and labour struggles during the 1930s; Yorke provides biographical information for almost every named person, Canadian or otherwise, in the manuscript. The introductory chapter details Liversedge's difficulties finding a publisher for his account, which he completed in 1966. The Communist Party of Canada reversed a decision to publish it after a short selection had appeared in *Marxist Quarterly* in the same year. Liversedge turned to Vancouver historian Irene Howard, who added material drawn

from interviews with him, before he became unhappy with the process. He died in 1974 without seeing it in print.

The Spanish Civil War was Liversedge's second in Europe, and he rarely romanticizes the day-to-day fighting experience. Their boat having been bombed en route, some comrades didn't even make it to Spanish shores. In seeing the Canadian survivors of the Battle of Brunete (July 1937), Liversedge "could not remember seeing men quite so drained of all vitality in France in the First World War" (77). "Our friends who made it through Belchite [August–September 1937] troubled us," he writes. "All were changed; even their facial expressions were changed ... War is an obscene atrocity, and no man comes out of it the same as before" (83–84). While detailing organizational conflicts with Americans and others, Liversedge remains silent on the brutal Stalinist subversion of the war effort.

Liversedge's book belongs to a wider genre of leftist historical writing of the Cold War era – one largely untouched by New Left and New Communist ideas. Thanks to the works of (old) Communists such as Steve Brodie and McEwan, ccrers such as Stanley Hutcheson and Dorothy Steeves, and almost unknown figures like Alf Bingham of the Common Good Co-operative Association, British Columbia has an abundance of histories of the leftist activism of the 1930s. It is a small shelf, true, but one larger than survives for many provinces. In recognizing Liversedge and his compatriots, we recognize the centrality of the subjects associated with the Great Depression to the emergence of a vibrant social history on the Left Coast and elsewhere.

*Tales from the Back Bumper:
A Century of BC Licence Plates*

Christopher Garrish

Victoria: Heritage House, 2013.
168 pp. \$19.95 paper.

BEN BRADLEY
University of Toronto

MY PARENTS STILL HAVE a set of white-on-blue licence plates in their garage, kept from the mid-1980s, when British Columbia switched to the blue-on-white plates with waving flag that have now been standard issue for almost thirty years. *Tales from the Back Bumper* explains the appeal of these old plates: they are souvenirs of a time when affixing new plates was an annual routine, and when BC motorists looked forward not only to a new set of digits every year but also to regular colour changes and the occasional new logo or slogan.

Christopher Garrish is an enthusiastic collector of BC licence plates, as evidenced by his award-winning and encyclopedic website www.BCPL8S.ca. He is also a trained historian whose research on cooperative fruit marketing has appeared in this journal. With *Tales from the Back Bumper*, he aims to provide a social and institutional history of licence plates in British Columbia that avoids getting caught up in details about colour, design, and bolt-hole placement – details that he acknowledges are “like catnip for collectors” (19). He very much succeeds in his aim. This book will appeal to a popular audience, most of whom use passenger plates on their vehicles and are unaware of just how complicated and diverse the licencing process has been. It is also of use to historians who are interested in government agencies, bureaucratic monitoring, and the everyday iconography of British Columbia.

The book is divided into eight thematic and generously illustrated chapters. The first outlines the origins and general development trends of licence plates in North America. Chapter 2 is about the production of licence plates in British Columbia. Automobile owners had to make their own plates until 1913, when the provincial government deemed it necessary to have a standardized form, which led to the mass production of plates. Garrish shows that political patronage played a key role in plate manufacturing until 1931, when production moved to Oakalla Prison, where it remained until the Social Credit government contracted it out in 1984.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are about passenger licence plates. They cover questions of design (including colours, graphics, and slogans), distribution, validation, and format management. A few sections are somewhat technical, but the glossary provided at the end of the book proves helpful. Many readers will gravitate towards Chapter 5, which is about personalized plates. Six-digit vanity plates were introduced in British Columbia in 1979, but for decades prior to that the Motor Vehicle Branch had had a “special request” policy whereby motorists could stake a claim on specific sets of plates. Favourites included plates with low numbers, lucky numbers, and street address numbers. Anyone could apply, but Garrish alludes to preferential treatment for the well-heeled and politically connected.

Chapters 6 and 7 focus on licence plates for commercial vehicles like trucks, taxis, and buses. Here Garrish steers the reader through a complicated narrative involving multiple scales of jurisdiction

within and beyond British Columbia as governments strove to regulate competition, to ensure safety, and, above all, to make commercial vehicle operators pay a fair share towards road maintenance and construction. By the 1970s, many commercial vehicles veritably bristled with special plates, municipal plates, miniature plates, and decals, but this clutter was gradually swept away by regional reciprocity agreements and then the Free Trade Agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement. This discussion of the regulation and deregulation of commercial road transport in British Columbia neatly complements that found in Daniel Francis's *Trucking in British Columbia* (Harbour Publishing, 2012). The final chapter of the book is about licence plate collecting as a hobby.

This reader would have appreciated more information on how licence plates were used to monitor British Columbia's motoring public, whether by the police in criminal and traffic enforcement contexts or for banal purposes such as the registration of guests at motels and campgrounds. That said, *Tales from the Back Bumper* covers a great deal of ground and suggests that historians of British Columbia would do well to turn their attention towards topics like motor vehicle testing, driver licencing, and the issuance of health care cards. This soundly researched book, with its bibliography and meticulous endnotes, will be helpful to anyone pursuing these topics.



The Grande Dames of the Cariboo

Julie Fowler

Halfmoon Bay: Caitlin Press,
2013.

224 pp. \$24.95 paper.

MARIA TIPPETT

Cambridge University

FAR TOO LITTLE IS known about artistic activity in the interior of British Columbia – past and present alike. Julie Fowler seeks to fill this lacuna by examining the lives of two mother-and-daughter artists: Vivien Cowan (1893-1990) and Sonia Cornwall (1919-2006). They spent most of their lives on the 4,452 hectare Onward Ranch near 150 Mile House in the Cariboo.

The author makes it clear from the outset, in this nicely produced book, that she wishes to free herself “from traditional essay structure and to explore different ways to tell a nonfiction story” (14). Armed with a video camera and a tape recorder, Fowler constructed *The Grande Dames of the Cariboo* over a six-year period. Thus she attended a memorial service for Sonia Cornwall in 2006. She interviewed artists like Joe Plaskett, Tako Tanabe, and others who had visited Onward Ranch following the Second World War. She sought out Cowan’s and Cornwall’s surviving relatives. Moreover, she orchestrates a series of fictive interviews with Vivien Cowan.

Based partly on Cowan’s unpublished autobiography and partly on the author’s own imagination, the “interviews” tell us

little of the pioneer life on Onward Ranch, which was established in 1919; little of the trajectory of Cowan's later artistic career – she only began painting after her husband's death in 1939; little of Cowan's activities with the Cariboo Art Society, which she established at Williams Lake in 1945; and virtually nothing about the oil-on-board paintings that are scattered throughout the book.

What the reader does get, in abundance, are the author's imaginary encounters with the artist. Vivien Cowan's smile is predictably "charming" (205). When the American-born Cowan first saw the Cariboo shortly after the First World War, "the bare brown hills seemed forbidding to me, being a lover of colour" (66). Few surprises, then. Upon meeting her future husband Charles Cowan in 1918, "It was truly love at first sight" (58). Fowler, who runs Island Mountain Arts and the Arts Wells Festival, is not shy about working herself into imaginary exchanges with her deceased friend. Thus Cowan tells Fowler: "The work that you are doing up there [in Wells] is probably part of what makes you feel so passionate about it" (68). In another of their cozy conversations, Cowan obligingly advises the novice author: "Do not be discouraged by your first efforts" (18).

One of the interviews that Cowan posthumously granted sheds a benign light on her encounters, in the mid-1940s, with A.Y. Jackson, who "was a most delightful and unassuming man and a pleasure to have as a guest" (78–79). During further posthumous musings, Vivien Cowan passes on a few tips about painting methods: "Learning to really see shapes and colours in ordinary things, in an active way" (137). Adopting a more conventional research strategy, Fowler adds to her portrait of Cowan by quoting her contemporary letters to such artists as A.Y. Jackson and Joe Plaskett.

And what of Vivien Cowan's daughter, Sonia Cornwall? The author reproduces

some interesting letters from Jackson to the younger woman; and there are ample illustrations of Sonia's work. Though both women were clearly disciples of Jackson, the daughter was the more imaginative artist. The reproduction of *The Onward Barn* (undated) demonstrates that Sonia even ventured, with some success, into abstract painting and that far from being on the periphery of the art world she was very much in touch.

In 1965, most of Onward Ranch was sold to the Oblate Brothers. Vivien, now over seventy, moved to a house near Williams Lake. Sonia kept a few acres of the original farm and lived there until her death in 2006. Though her mother had predeceased her by sixteen years, she is very much alive in the pages of this book. "I would love to visit you," so Julie Fowler reports her as telling her, "but I don't travel too much anymore" (80). Sonia and Vivien can be considered lucky to have their memories kept alive in a book that gives a new meaning to the term "ghost-written."

*Svend Robinson:
A Life in Politics*
Graeme Truelove

Vancouver: New Star Books, 2013.
346 pp. \$24.00 paper.

JOSEPH TILLEY
Simon Fraser University

I VIVIDLY REMEMBER when I first heard the name "Svend Robinson." I was attending the wedding of a distant cousin I had never met before and have not seen since. At the reception, in Burnaby,

the best man made a speech replete with crudely homophobic quips about the local member of Parliament – and the audience responded with enthusiastic laughter. Over two decades later, such blatant homophobia is much less socially acceptable. This is partly thanks to the legacy of Svend Robinson, who made his name not only as Canada's first openly gay MP but also as one of the most controversial and principled politicians British Columbia has ever sent to Ottawa.

Written with access to Robinson's personal archives and informed by a wide range of interviews (for a nominal list, see 306), Graeme Truelove's highly readable *Svend Robinson: A Life in Politics* is the first biography of Robinson and will be of interest to scholars and lay readers alike. It is timely, too, given that cynicism about politics is at a record high level and almost any mention of politicians prompts an exasperated, "They're all the same!" That is not something that could ever be said about Robinson, a politician who not only "talked the talk" but "walked the walk" and, as Truelove extensively details, often did so at great political and personal risk.

Born to a Danish mother and an American father, Robinson's troubled early years saw his family moving to various places in Europe and the United States before finally settling in Burnaby in 1966. His mother's roots in Scandinavian social democracy naturally translated into supporting the New Democratic Party (NDP). Both mother and son canvassed for its campaigns. While others leaped onto Pierre Trudeau's bandwagon, Robinson lauded Tommy Douglas as the real progressive leader worthy of support and adulation. First elected in 1979 at the age of twenty-seven, Robinson quickly began doing what any good MP of the left should be doing: challenging existing orthodoxies, giving voice to marginalized people and issues, and articulating what can and should be done to make the world a better place.

One of numerous things that will strike readers is just how many of the "radical" and "controversial" policies Robinson advocated over his twenty-five years in Parliament are now reality in Canada's legal landscape. Truelove notes "there has yet to be an exhaustive study of that impact" (5) – work to be taken up by future political historians.

Readers will learn a great deal about Robinson, his motivations, his colleagues and friends, and will gain multiple valuable insights into the internal workings of the political system during one of the most tumultuous eras in Canadian, British Columbian, and NDP history. Without passing overt judgment, Truelove also documents, in unsparing detail, the downright appalling behaviour of the mainstream media, including incidents that led to Robinson winning libel suits. The book is quite revealing – indeed, each of the twenty chapters contains surprises – and ranges widely from Robinson's physical abuse by his father, to the horrific hate mail he regularly received, to his regrets about some of the decisions he made (such as his failed 1995 bid for the NDP leadership). Robinson's staunch commitment to integrity included rejecting his advisor Olivia Chow's bizarre recommendation to manipulate the convention process by instructing some of his delegates to vote for rival Lorne Nystrom on the first ballot to ensure his own victory on the final ballot (192). When it became evident he would face Alexa McDonough, not Nystrom, in the last round and likely lose, he instead chose to concede early and to support her as a gesture to unite the party. That decision resulted in angry criticism from many of his supporters; he

now deems it a “mistake” (196). This is but a taste of the unexpected candour Robinson displays in this book.

Today’s NDP has turned its back on its roots and fully embraces the same neo-liberalism and continentalism it used to rail against. In 2013, the commitment to democratic socialism enshrined in its constitution was replaced with a bland, poorly written successor statement that, as Truelove puts it, renders the NDP a “hollow and superlative imitation of the Liberal Party” (304). In this context, it is almost hard to believe that there were politicians like Robinson in the not-so-distant past. After finishing Truelove’s book, many readers, regardless of personal politics, will undoubtedly have the same feeling I had: I miss Svend Robinson. Canadian politics is a much more monochrome place without him.

*Conversations with a Dead Man:
The Legacy of
Duncan Campbell Scott*
Mark Abley

Madeira Park: Douglas & McIntyre,
2013. 264 pp. \$32.95.

KEITH D. SMITH
Vancouver Island University

MARK ABLEY WAS understandably alarmed when an impeccably dressed apparition appeared in his living room claiming to be Duncan Campbell Scott. An accomplished and respected poet, Scott spent over fifty years working in Canada’s Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), an office he led for almost two decades before retiring in 1932. From his position at the helm of the DIA, Scott oversaw some of the most oppressive policies and legislation in Canadian history. While he was generally respected, even after his death in 1947, sixty

years later he appeared in the results of a survey conducted by the *Beaver*, now *Canada’s History* magazine, as one of the ten worst Canadians. Scott has returned from the dead, then, to set the record straight and to choose Abley, himself a gifted poet, journalist, and non-fiction writer, as someone “who will be able to appreciate my work from the inside, as it were. I mean my real work, of course” (17). Scott’s real work was apparently his poetry.

In this work of creative non-fiction, Abley has Scott’s ghost drift in and out of his narrative, engaging in conversation, explaining himself, and asking for understanding. Abley is critical of DIA policy throughout, especially the shameful treatment of Indigenous children in residential schools and the continued effects of that treatment on families and communities decades later. He also demonstrates that Scott and his contemporaries, even in their literary work, underestimated the strength and resilience of Indigenous cultures. At the same time, Abley’s primary concern in this study is to work through the apparent contradictions between Scott’s poetry, which he sees as sympathetic to Indigenous people, and his work for the DIA. While certainly there is little compassion evident in Scott’s official correspondence, Abley seems not to entertain the notion that sympathy too, like DIA policy, can be an expression of power, feelings of superiority, and a colonial attitude. From this perspective, perhaps there is not such a gulf between Scott’s poetry and his writings as a bureaucrat.

Abley notes that, because “this is a book intended for readers, rather than academic specialists,

it is not weighed down by lengthy pages of footnotes" (223). Nonetheless, Abley has consulted a remarkable range of sources in the creation of this work and a bibliographic essay is provided for each chapter. With this depth of research it is puzzling that Abley seems not to have consulted Scott's writings in the massive DIA document inventory in Record Group (RG) 10 available at Library and Archives Canada and on microfilm at various sites across the country.

His research does, though, allow him to carefully explain the intellectual, political, and social milieu within which Scott operated and to illustrate the racial attitudes prevalent in Canadian society and elsewhere, including the less than egalitarian views held by Winston Churchill and Mohandas Gandhi. But Scott was far more than a product of his time or a man just taking orders from his political superiors. He pursued a policy of cultural suppression with much more enthusiasm than did most of his contemporaries. Nonetheless, Abley is correct in stating that Scott did not operate in a vacuum. Perhaps the greatest contribution made by *Conversations with a Dead Man* is that it reminds us that, while it is easy to blame particular individuals for past and present injustices, we must all assume responsibility for educating ourselves regarding the situations now faced by Indigenous communities and for working actively to right those wrongs instead of waiting for politicians or bureaucrats to do it for us.



*We Are Born with the Songs
Inside Us: Lives and Stories of
First Nations People in
British Columbia*

Katherine Palmer Gordon

Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing, 2013. 248 pp. \$24.95 paper.

SARAH NICKEL

Simon Fraser University

W*e Are Born with the Songs Inside Us* is an important and long overdue book about contemporary First Nations experiences in British Columbia. Using narrative interviews with almost two dozen First Nations people, Katherine Palmer Gordon seeks to break down dominant discourses of tragedy and despair that often punctuate literature on First Nations peoples by offering alternate stories of cultural strength, empowerment, and humour.

To bring coherence to this multi-vocal work, Gordon begins by creating an analogy of First Nations historico-cultural experience by referencing a presentation on birds by Salt Spring Island naturalist John Neville. Neville argues that, while birds are "born with a song inside them," young birds must hear their songs from their fathers in order to fully learn them. Noticing parallels to First Nations lives and histories, Gordon argues that many First Nations peoples were disconnected from their culture through government policies and projects and that, like the young birds, many were unable to learn from their parents. Rather than focusing on settler colonial oppression and culture loss, however, Gordon's work shares and celebrates accounts of First Nations

peoples who have reconnected with or preserved their cultural identity or their “songs.”

This book is organized into sixteen chapters, each dedicated to an individual’s story. Through their interviews, narrators speak about their work as artists, educators, or lawyers as well as about family and culture. Many use their interviews to comment on and to dismantle prevailing stereotypes and misconceptions about Aboriginal identity and culture, Indian Act benefits, substance abuse, and First Nations government corruption. In the text, Gordon expertly weaves together her own voice with those of the narrators, allowing the reader to experience the conversations between the author and narrator as well as the personal reflections of each person. While Gordon leaves large pieces of the interviews intact, she also interjects at key moments to provide important historical or political context and to note personal or thematic connections between chapters and individuals. For example, she includes a short summary of the Tsawwassen treaty alongside the story of former Tsawwassen chief and treaty negotiator Kim Baird (Kwuntiltunaat), which deepens the reader’s understanding of treaty issues and Baird’s experiences (118–20).

Gordon achieves a nice balance by proposing this work as a counter-narrative to the abundant stories of Aboriginal oppression without obscuring the impact and legacy of the colonial experience. Many of the stories are steeped in the histories of culture loss and abuse caused by the residential school system and Canadian Indian policy as well as by the pervasive racism that continues today. The focus, however, remains on how First Nations peoples in British Columbia are grappling with these continued legacies and using their cultural strength to achieve personal and collective success. Despite addressing both positive and negative experiences,

however, my only criticism of this work is its failure to truly engage with some of the most pertinent and controversial political questions facing First Nations peoples in British Columbia today. For example, while many of these stories address treaty negotiations, they provide little direct engagement with the continued opposition to the treaty process in many First Nations communities. In this sense, some of the descriptions of Aboriginal politics seem one-sided or oversimplified.

While this book will appeal to multiple audiences, many First Nations readers will see glimpses, if not mirror images, of themselves and their experiences. For instance, as a non-status First Nations person of Secwepemc ancestry, I was immediately struck by how Lisa Webster-Gibson, a woman of Mohawk and Scottish descent, experienced the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs’ hiring process. At her interview for an environmental assessment position some years ago, Webster-Gibson was shocked when the human resources person exclaimed that there were only three Native women in her professional field and that the department had now hired two of them (23). I had a similar experience at an academic conference, where my “Indianness” seemed more important than my professional qualifications or abilities. This book, then, truly captures the messy and at times contradictory experiences facing Aboriginal peoples in their daily lives, while concurrently creating a shared sense of community and delighting the reader with rich, multilayered, and important narratives.

*Women Caring for Kamloops,
1890-1975*

Andrew Yarmie

Kamloops: Textual Studies in Canada
and Kamloops Museum and Archives,
2013. 235 pp. \$19.95 paper.

*Daughters in the City: Mennonite
Maids in Vancouver, 1931-61*

Ruth Derksen Siemens
(with Sandra Borger)

Vancouver: Fernwood Press, 2013.
93 pp. \$24.95 paper.

LISA PASOLLI
Trent University

IN MANY WAYS, Ruth Derksen Siemens's *Daughters in the City: Mennonite Maids in Vancouver, 1931-61* and Andrew Yarmie's *Women Caring for Kamloops, 1890-1975* are very different books. The former is an affectionate history, one that centres on oral histories and photographs, of the many young Mennonite women who worked as domestic servants in Vancouver's middle- and upper-class homes. In the latter, Yarmie digs into local archives and newspapers to write a more academically oriented history of women's voluntary organizations in Kamloops. Both books, though, are local histories engaged in similar projects: recovering and recognizing the often invisible work of caregiving, domestic labour, and voluntary labour carried out by women.

The daughters of *Daughters in the City* are women and girls who settled with their families in various parts of western Canada during two waves of Mennonite immigration: the first, in the 1920s, as refugees from Russia; the second, after the Second World War, arriving from Europe. Seeking to make money to help

pay off family debts, these young women moved to Vancouver and took up positions as domestic servants. *Daughters in the City* focuses in particular on the two "Girls' Homes" that became the centre of social and community life for these *Mädchen* (maidens) – the Mary Martha Home and the Bethel Home. The oral interviews collected by Siemens and her research assistant Sandra Borger provide fascinating glimpses into the *Mädchen*'s efforts to navigate the uncertainties and unknowns of the "evil city." But the centrepiece of the book is undoubtedly the voluminous photographs, which offer a rich visual history of life inside the Girls' Homes and the ways in which the *Mädchen* sustained each other with friendships, leisure activities, and shared workloads.

In *Women Caring for Kamloops*, Yarmie highlights women's roles in five of Kamloops's voluntary organizations: the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Royal Inland Hospital, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Red Cross, the Council of Women, and the Young Women's Christian Association. The women who were part of these organizations provided crucial health, educational, cultural, and social services to Kamloops citizens over several decades, and, as Yarmie argues throughout, they were just as crucial to the development of this frontier town as were the pioneering men often given more credit in historical narratives. While this is largely a history that celebrates women's contributions, Yarmie does not romanticize their work. He points out that these middle-class women often operated with racist and class-based assumptions that precluded them from offering the same level

of care to all members of the community, particularly to Indigenous peoples and immigrants.

Both books address important themes in women's history, though Yarmie does so much more explicitly by rooting his analysis in the pertinent historiography. He draws in particular on scholarship around maternal feminism in the early twentieth century. The Kamloops women who worked in voluntary organizations, Yarmie shows, negotiated the potential tensions between their public and private lives by translating their "natural" caregiving roles into the public sphere and, in this respect, were part of a much larger British Columbian and Canadian story. His analysis of women's organizations in the latter part of the twentieth century could benefit from the same kind of scholarly framework (the work of Margaret Little and Wendy McKeen comes to mind). Like their foremothers earlier in the century, Kamloops women in the 1960s and 1970s were part of a larger story about feminist activism and, particularly, about the intersectional complexities of women's experiences of motherhood, paid work, poverty, and domestic violence. Attention to this wider context would, for example, enhance Yarmie's somewhat thin analysis of the YWCA in the postwar years.

The most significant value of local histories such as these is that they complicate generally accepted narratives about women's history. In tracing a strong lineage of women's voluntary work over more than eighty years, Yarmie shows (as have many historians) that women's activism was not, in fact, in retreat between the two "waves" of feminism. Likewise, in highlighting the experiences of Mennonite women, Siemens helps to deepen our understanding of the lives of immigrant women who were always expected to work despite the dominant prescriptions against women's wage-earning. In challenging the ways we think about women's place

in society, and in adding to what we know about immigrant experiences, these books together paint another small corner of the rich, varied, and complex portrait of BC women.

Rural Women's Health

Beverly D. Leipert, Belinda Leach, and Wilfreda E. Thurston, editors

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012. 472 pp. \$39.95 paper.

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THIS VOLUME IS a rare and important collection of groundbreaking work on a topic too often ignored in Canadian academia. I was delighted when I was asked to review this collection, simply to ensure that it would find a place on my bookshelves. And I was equally pleased to find old "friends" in its pages – academic colleagues, community research partners, and unknown scholars whose work has informed my own research on rural women in British Columbia. There are twenty-two chapters in all, in five subsections: Research, Policy, and Action; Health and the Environment; Gender-Based Violence; Population Health, Health Promotion, and Public Health; and Theorizing Rurality and Gender. Reading *Rural Women's Health* is like attending a three-day conference at which every second speaker makes you rethink your approach, your suppositions, and your understandings of the topic on hand. Truly, the editors are to be commended for producing a volume that both communicates critical

scholarly findings and fosters research and activist collaborations.

Although a historical image of the quintessential Prairie women – poke-bonnets, wagons and horses – adorns the book cover, I found little history inside. Instead, we are presented with the work of psychologists, sociologists, geographers, and anthropologists, set alongside experiential perspectives from dieticians, community care workers, nurses, patients, and mothers. The blend of theoretical and experiential perspectives, and the presentation of a diversity of rural women across the spectrum of ethnicity, age, and regions, are key strengths of the book and make it a valued teaching resource. And there are important contributions from key scholars from outside Canada, deepening the book’s insights into the well-being of women from rural and remote regions. A reader in British Columbia will find many points of comparison and intersection here.

Such richness suggests celebration, but it is evident that the editors see much cause for concern. The high-water mark of research and policy interest in rural women’s health in this country was the late 1990s and early 2000s. Since then, funding cutbacks have decimated promising research programs and deprived rural women of much needed access to health services. The Canadian universities at which the study of rural women’s health is a vital, live thing can today be counted on the fingers of one hand: the University of Northern British Columbia, the University of Regina, Guelph University, and Memorial University. British Columbia is well represented with a total of seven authors from the province.

Urban Canadians (and there are a lot of us) have difficulty understanding the ramifications of mental health services or prenatal care being two hours’ drive from our front door, and this book serves the useful purpose of making us see the world from the rural perspective. For scholars

of British Columbia, this volume is an important introduction to our remote and rural regions – the vast pieces of the province that we fly over or utilize as a seasonal playground (always in search of a decent cup of coffee) – and to a rural mindset and way of life. I would like to have seen more work on Indigenous women, central to the rural story in Canada, but acknowledge limitations of space. And, clearly, this book is much more than a typical academic presentation. It is a political statement about the loss of well-being – the cutting off of state support from a way of life that our federal government likes to portray in nostalgic “Canadiana” moments. One imagines the editors not at the computer keyboard but, rather, splitting and stacking firewood, ordering seeds in the dead of winter, carrying the groceries in from the car. They know, and they care, and their passion ignites the volume.

My criticism of this book sounds slightly absurd: Why is it a book? Book lover that I am, I do not think it should be a book at all. I cannot help but think that *Rural Women’s Health* will inevitably fall short of the aspirations of many of its authors, especially the ones located outside the academy. Picture the volume that I have described as a website replete with links to statistical data, art, seed catalogues, photographs, audio and video interview clips, blogs, and places to create petitions and to upload links and documents. I read recently about “citizen science,” a process whereby American academic scientists are calling on the general public for research assistance, in one case, in mapping the impact of fracking on the Pennsylvania environment. Here the distance

between the academic and the activist is potentially narrowed. One of the great twentieth-century tragedies for rural Canadian women was the demise of Women's Institutes as a critical source of rural female solidarity and civil engagement. Imagine pairing this book and twenty-first-century technologies to recreate "The Institute" – as it was known to countless women in rural and remote areas of the country – in virtual form, fostering community, deeper and wider understandings between rural women and scholars who care, and a strong public call for funding to address the rural health care "deficiencies" so clearly outlined in this book.

Stalled: The Representation of Women in Canadian Governments

Linda Trimble, Jane Arscott, and Manon Tremblay, editors

Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013. 360 pp.
\$34.95 paper.

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THIS BOOK IS A must-read for people interested in Canadian history, gender, and electoral politics in Canada. I cannot say enough about *Stalled: The Representation of Women in Canadian Governments*, which includes chapters written by well-known scholars, features a strong cross-section of expertise in Canadian political science, covers virtually every province and territory, and contains the different constituent groups within a Canadian context. Each chapter tackles hard questions about progress to date and what is next for particular regions or provinces. The informational boxes at the start of chapters offer a sketch of the history, and sometimes the lack of progress,

of women in Canadian politics. This might explain the telling name of the book: *Stalled*. These boxes will prove useful for teaching purposes.

In her foreword, Sylvia Bashevkin does a fine job of setting up the book and introducing the Canadian political landscape, while Jocelyne Praud's "When Numerical Gains Are Not Enough: Women in British Columbia" provides a strong overview of women's gains in BC politics. She notes that: "numerically and symbolically speaking, British Columbia can be identified as a vanguard province" (55). However, when we dig deeper we see that gains did not necessarily mean substantive changes for the status of women or more policy change. Thus, British Columbia is a good example of how we need to focus on policy changes that positively influence women's lives in the province.

Well written and appropriate for lay and academic audiences, *Stalled* is the perfect addition to classes in gender and politics, to upper-division courses in comparative politics focused on the status of women and politics, and to Canadian history courses. Chapters convey the differences and similarities between the provinces and territories and offer a great argument for why the Senate should not be abolished. Why? Many gains for women in Canadian politics have been made through Senate appointments. And this only scratches the surface of the book's contents. *Stalled* also contains chapters dedicated to the House of Commons and Senate and to Indigenous women and their status within formal Canadian politics. The meta-backdrop of the book suggests that we have made gains but not enough of them. The various

chapters offer glimpses of what is needed; but, ultimately, we need to understand that candidates, parties, the electoral system, and socialization are all at play with the status of women in Canadian politics. We have lots of work left to do.

Okanagan Geology South: Geologic Highlights of the South Okanagan, British Columbia

Murray A. Roed and
Robert J. Fulton, editors

Kelowna: Okanagan Geology Committee and Sandhill Book Marketing,
2011. 256 pp. \$24.95 paper.

WAYNE WILSON
Kelowna

GUIDEBOOKS PRESENT risks. Some authors inadvertently lead readers into the minutiae that are their passion. Others find themselves indulging in editorial or polemic. Yet others lose their readers in what might be described as a kind of organizational dementia. In this case, the authors of *Okanagan Geology South* have avoided these pitfalls; rather, they have crafted a pleasant journey across the time and space of the Okanagan Valley from Summerland south to Osoyoos.

At the outset, Roed and Fulton are clear that this is a “non-technical” review of the bedrock and surficial geology of one of the province’s most distinct landscapes. That said, they provide a handy though adumbrated glossary and a list of references to offer context and to back up their work. In this way, these technical specialists have given us a foundation upon which to unfold the geological complexity revealed in compelling vignettes and plain language descriptions.

The authors build on an impressive legacy of geological study and research, opening the book with thoughtful references to the works of G.M. Dawson, Hugh Nasmith, Hugh Bostock, C.C. Kelly, and others. From here they follow a straightforward approach with a chapter on geologic concepts and followed by a chapter that relates those broader concepts to the Okanagan region itself. The substance of the text moves south to north and uses the overlay of settlement landscapes as points of reference. This is a clever and effective strategy for a guidebook. First, the valley itself trends north-south, so this format follows established transportation routes and thereby helps facilitate the authors’ explorations of the geological wonders illustrated. Second, residents and visitors congregate in and move between points of settlement. Roed and Fulton have capitalized on this. They ease the reader from place to place by making ready reference to towns, roads, bedrock features, landscape changes, and geological highlights.

With the local setting and context established at a regional level, chapters 5 through 9 go on to present a pleasant contrast in the form of thematic explorations. Chapter 5 plumbs the sensational topic of geological hazard, which is clearly dominated by all manner of slope failure, landslide, debris torrents, and rock falls; while Chapter 6 examines the region’s thin but exciting brush with mining, especially the hard rock boom-and-bust mining complex represented in the Camp McKinney and Fairview areas.

From the settlement era forward, water has played an increasingly important role up and down the

semi-arid Okanagan region. Fully two chapters concern the groundwater and surface water that will invariably inform the rate, form, and direction of settlement and development in the region in the foreseeable future. Avoiding the political implications of water management decision making, the authors are nevertheless clear that the area's hydrological circumstances present a kind of limit to growth for the region.

No guidebook on the Okanagan Valley's geophysical setting would be complete without a chapter on wine and geology, and this volume offers an overview of the topic; however, in the end, this discussion reads a little like a tourist guide to a few select wineries. Nevertheless, while the topic of *terroir* is highly contextualized and surrounded by its own mystique, Roed and Fulton have at least opened this door and recognized the need for more research on the topic.

The authors have employed at least two strategies to make their work as accessible as possible. Throughout the text they have included sidebars to highlight a range of topics and themes that illustrate their points. Perhaps even more important is their willingness to include pertinent historical photographs, maps, and artwork that help reveal their clear passion for what is often glossed over as simply the rocks and dirt of the region.

In 238 pages, Roed and Fulton have successfully distilled a complex, sprawling, and disparate range of data into an eminently accessible volume that is essential reading for everyone from tourism providers and educators to hobby geologists and those who have a curious nature about the world around them. Added to Roed's 2004 volume on the geology of the northern reaches of the Okanagan Valley (*Okanagan Geology, British Columbia*), this book completes the picture – and does so in a captivating manner.

