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## Book Reviews

*The politics of the Yukon Territory, 1898–1909*, by David R. Morrison. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968. \$4.75.

This book is an encouraging development in the literature of the Yukon Territory. While the Klondike gold rush has been written about again and again, for seventy years remarkably little attention has been paid to anything but narratives of the epic treks over mountain passes, the difficult search for precious metal, and the naughty-nineties hijinx in Dawson City. Mr. Morrison's volume, adapted from an MA thesis submitted to the University of Saskatchewan, may herald the long overdue turn of scholarly attention to factors behind the fantastic and well-publicized gold-rush era. Certainly the fabulous legend of the Yukon will be confirmed (and footnoted) by this study, rather than being exploded as myth.

Morrison's avowed purpose is "to render an account of the relationship between government and governed in the Yukon during the period from 1898 to 1909." Although his study is "not cast in a theoretical mold it offers a case study of political behaviour in an environment of economic decline." It attempts "to shed some light on Canada's experience as an imperial power" and to make "some contribution to the continuing debate over what form Canadian territorial governments should take in future."

The book is not always completely successful in keeping these theoretical objectives in focus. The reader has a tendency to lose sight of the broad framework while following the extremely intricate manoeuvrings of the Yukon politicians whose amazing behaviour is told in a wealth of documentation.

Yukon politics then centred exclusively around patronage and personalities, not principles or the pretense of principles. There is a larger-than-life quality to political life in Dawson between 1898 and 1909. The personalities and their actions almost defy academic analysis. Have such people and such behaviour ever appeared between the covers of any of the eleven preceding volumes of *Canadian Studies in History and Government*?

Most Territorial officials appear to have been appointed because they were friends of Sir Wilfrid Laurier or Clifford Sifton. Once in the Yukon these administrators played politics to the hilt and added old Canadian controversies, such as Roman Catholic-Protestant rivalry and competition between English- and French-speaking cliques, to a political cauldron already

boiling with local grievances about mining laws, administrative efficiency, and local autonomy.

Yukon Liberals split into two factions styled "Tabs" and "Steambeers." Newspapers reached the ultimate in vituperation. When Commissioner Congdon attempted to make Dawson City agree to the suspension of its charter, "Duff Pattullo, one of the city councillors, crawled into the building through a window, and later reported that the [City] Clerk was altering the voter's list to disenfranchise all those who favoured retention of the present local institutions." Some apprenticeship for a future premier of British Columbia!

It is unfortunate that the University of Toronto Press print this Canadian Studies series as they do; the lines of print are too long and too close together. They tired the eyes of one interested reviewer and their density will probably discourage many prospective readers. While neat and equipped with appendixes, notes, a bibliography, and an index, the volume does lack physical "customer-appeal." This is a pity, because David Morrison's *Politics of the Yukon* has broken new ground and deserves to be widely read. It is not only informative but for an academic study amazingly entertaining.

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*A bibliography of British Columbia: Laying the foundations, 1849-1899*, compiled by Barbara J. Lowther with Muriel Laing. Victoria: Social Sciences Research Centre of the University of Victoria, 1968. \$18.50.

*Union list of manuscripts in Canadian repositories*, edited by Robert S. Gordon *et al.* Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1968. \$10.00.

The publications under review mark a new stage in the development of studies of British Columbia. The *Bibliography of British Columbia* brings together in a convenient form the holdings of many libraries, and the *Union list* makes available for the first time a systematic listing of the largest collections of manuscript materials in the area. As well as providing a solid base for new work, they reflect the current state of the field. In neither case did the initiative for publications come from those institutions with the richest holdings of books and manuscripts about British Columbia; for this leadership we are indebted to the Social Sciences Research Centre of the University of Victoria and the Public Archives of Canada.

The handsomely printed pages of the Lowther volume make a worthy addition to the growing list of regional Canadian bibliographies and are destined to become a standard reference. Listed are published materials about British Columbia, contemporary works appearing in order of their date of imprint, followed by more modern works dealing with the period 1849-

1899. "Published" material is taken to mean catalogued items; uncatalogued broadsheets, play programs, and other such ephemera are not included. Entries are somewhat fuller than the standard catalogue card, thus aiding the user in assessing their significance, and the index provides biographical data on authors.

In a work of this kind, completeness is hard to achieve – in fact, book-dealers are already offering their wares as "not in Lowther." What is more important, however, is the basis of selection. Here the compiler stakes out the ground clearly; this bibliography is aimed at "the student doing independent research." Considering the origin of the project, this presumably means the senior undergraduate and the graduate student. Inclusion or exclusion is, therefore, only relevant in the light of this objective.

One decision that does seem to be hard to justify in a work planned for students is the treatment of serials. Each serial is given only one entry, in the year it began (listings for those which continued into the twentieth century should be repeated in the next volume). Therefore, individual periodical articles are not listed, an omission that can be defended on grounds of bulk and cost, but is still much to be regretted, since this type of material is usually the hardest for the student to find. It is also a pity because excellent analyses of periodicals are already available in the card catalogue of the Northwest History collection in the Provincial Archives. The decision to omit them means that this aid will not be readily accessible unless that card catalogue is reproduced.

Another thorny path for the compiler was through the jungle of printed government documents. Publications of the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia are included, those of the province are omitted. Provincial documents were excluded because of the availability of Marjorie Holmes's two bibliographies: *Publications of the government of British Columbia, 1871-1947*, and *Royal commissions and commissions of enquiry . . . in British Columbia: A checklist* (1945). No such rationale is, however, offered for the treatment of federal government publications. Inclusion is inconsistent, seemingly determined by whether the document was located as a separate. For instance, the report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration of 1885 is listed, but the equally important report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Chinese Labor and Immigration of 1879 is omitted. How far the practice varies can be seen by the inclusion of another royal commission, that on British Columbia fisheries in 1892. It was not printed as a separate but is apparently entered because it was sighted in the library of the Fisheries Department in Ottawa. If all this leaves the student confused about the basis of selection, he will not be much enlightened by the brief note in the introduction advising him to use government documents.

One last comment – it is too bad that, even in these days of high book

prices, some of the subsidy for this project could not have been applied to keeping the price within reach of those to whom it is dedicated.

The *Union list of manuscripts* provides another welcome aid to the student. The manuscripts cover a wide range of Canadian history, although one may wonder at the exclusion of local history collections. Economic historians will be intrigued by the cryptic reference to the non-participation of institutions having "specialized collections such as business records." Individual entries list each of the manuscript collections of some 142 co-operating institutions, 14 of which are in British Columbia. These include the Provincial Archives, the Universities of British Columbia and Victoria, the Vancouver and New Westminster public libraries, museums in Victoria, Vancouver, New Westminster, Kamloops, Vernon, Penticton, and Rossland, as well as the provincial archives of the Anglican Church. The most notable omission is the reputedly rich collection at the City Archives of Vancouver. Apparently the more than \$20,000 provided annually by Vancouver taxpayers cannot ensure co-operation of the archives staff in this project.

One omission in the *Union list* slightly reduces its usefulness. There is no index by repository, such as is provided by the *National union catalog of manuscript collections* in the United States. This valuable type of indexing, which need only be a handlist, enables a quick survey to be made of the holdings of any given institution and should be added to future editions. A caution is also necessary about using the existing index. The heading of each main entry, eg, "British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority," is not repeated in the index, and cross-referencing is minimal. For the BC Hydro entry, no cross-reference could be found under any of the more obvious headings.

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