

The Canadian Indian: A History Since 1500. E. Palmer Patterson II. Collier Macmillan Canada Ltd., 1972. Pp. 210, maps, illus. \$3.95, paper.

Patterson's book, of obvious interest to historians, should also prove to be of significant interest to Canadians in general. The text, a sociological history of the Canadian Indian since 1500, is comprehensive and informative. But no book covering a time span of 470 years in less than 200 pages will make easy reading. The Canadian Indian is no exception. Although Patterson's topic may necessitate a convoluted writing style, the author magnifies this requirement considerably. Frequent examinations of aboriginal peoples of other continents interrupts what would otherwise be good chronological and geographical development of his subject. These sidetrips are of marginal relevance to the development of the topic. In a text where space is at an unusually high premium, more pertinent information should be inserted. The initial chapters of the text lack the sociological comment which is integrated so well into the latter chapters.

Despite these omissions, Patterson avoids most of the traditional traps of Indian historiography. The Canadian Indian is not portrayed as savage or barbaric; instead it is the white man who fills this role. Indians are seen, and rightly so, as colonial peoples; tribes attempting to hold their land and identity against an aggressive and encroaching white majority.

Patterson has skillfully avoided the traditional treatment of the Indian as a homogenous group, subject to identical changes and experiences. It is clearly illustrated that the culture of the Indian is not a static one. The culture of the Indian survived the changes brought by the white man;

changes which were, for the most part, aimed at the control of land and the eventual assimilation of the Indian minority. Control of Indian land has for the most part succeeded. Assimilation, on the other hand, has failed almost completely.

British Columbia is the best example of this failure. Under the leadership of such men as Chief Joe Capilano and Alfred Adams, the Indians of British Columbia have improved their civil rights, prevented to a large degree cultural assimilation, and have had moderate success in the control of their land.

The authors greatest strength in the writing of the text is his adept use of anthropological concepts. This knowledge provides the author with insight into the Indians as a people. This is necessary if, as Patterson has wished to do, the book is to be written from an Indian point of view. Patterson has accomplished what few before him have done. He has, with minor exceptions, written from an Indian point of view.

Jim Oliver
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Strangers Entertained: A History of the Ethnic Groups of British Columbia. John Norris. Vancouver, Evergreen Press Ltd., 1971. Pp. 254, illus. \$6.95.

A scholarly study of the ethnic groups of British Columbia has long been overdue. An understanding of the present-day British Columbian people and their culture can only be achieved through the realization that B. C. society is a result of the combination and integration of different ethnic beliefs and cultural contributions. Fortunately, this long-awaited account has now been made available through the efforts of Dr. John Norris, Professor of History at the University of British Columbia, who has drawn together and edited the provincial ethnic histories compiled by the Ethnic Sub-Committee of the British Columbia Centennial Committee. The great number of ethnic groups represented in the province, each an essential part

of British Columbian society, is really quite amazing.

This is one of those rare books that offers a comprehensive introduction to the forthcoming material. Dr. Norris's introduction is extremely beneficial and perhaps essential to his book. It presents all the various reasons leading to the immigration of ethnic groups to British Columbia and the problems facing any ethnic group arriving in a new community. His introduction outlines such factors as psychological expectations of ethnic groups, attitudes of receiving societies, and the effects of entrance status of immigrating groups. More importantly, the introduction examines the difficulties encountered by all ethnic groups in their attempt to integrate into British Columbia society, while simultaneously trying to preserve some of their ethnic traditions and identities.

One of the strong points of this book is the almost complete lack of negative bias or prejudice of the author against any of the groups. This is probably explained by the fact that each ethnic study "is based on accounts prepared by the groups themselves," Professor Norris melding them together into a smooth narrative. The author has adopted a positive, unbiased attitude in his survey of the ethnic groups and thereby produced a clear understanding of their individual traits.

Professor Norris has introduced the forty-six ethnic groups represented by dealing first with the native Indian people and then with the early settlers, namely the Americans, English and the French Canadians. From there he has proceeded to trace the story of the various other ethnic groups who originated in Europe and other parts of the world. The fact that each group had similar immigration fluctuations, according to the different historic periods, and that each suffered similar social problems with the receiving societies, tended to be somewhat repetitive. Nevertheless, Professor Norris has managed to keep the chapters as interesting as possible through the liberal use of examples. Names of many well-known British

Columbians are used throughout the book to indicate that all these groups have produced successful leaders. For example, the author mentions Mr. Peter Wing of Kamloops, Hon. Mr. Justice Angelo Branca of the Court of Appeal, and Chief Dan George of acting fame. It is thus possible for the reader to identify and relate with the different groups. The use of pictorial illustrations also adds to the involvement of the reader with the groups because his natural curiosity causes him to consider the different attitudes and relationships of the people in the pictures to their new environment.

Professor Norris has achieved his purpose in presenting the history of the arrival and settlement of B. C.'s many ethnic groups with their "contributions to its developing society and culture." Strangers Entertained promotes understanding of the people of British Columbia by making one realize that our province consists of multiple ethnic groups, all of which are essential to the development of our vibrant country. This book should be read by anyone interested in British Columbian development and hopefully it will encourage more research and publication in the area of ethnic studies.

Marilyn Harrison
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Along the Way: An Historical Account of Pioneering White Rock and Surrounding District in British Columbia. Margaret Lang. White Rock, Privately Published, 1967. Pp. 208. \$4.25.

If you are an early resident of the White Rock area and have been included in Margaret Lang's so called anthology of interviews with pioneers, you may enjoy Along the Way. If you have only one of these qualifications, you are a pioneer but have not been included, you should get a good laugh from the wild stories told by many of those interviewed, and an even bigger laugh at the naivety of Margaret Lang in presenting them as history.

The author states in her forward that the purpose of her efforts is to provide interesting reading and a reference for local history. Interesting

reading in the sense that a newspaper gossip column is fun to read - yes, but history - no. Even the average gossip column attempts to comment on or editorialize the rumors it feeds on and thus shows more historical method than this collection of seemingly verbatim recollections.

Of 200 pages, 155 are devoted to personal interviews that were gathered and published in local weekly newspapers over a ten year period. As folksy, community interest articles, they are quite acceptable; as valid accounts for the student of history, they are not acceptable.

Nowhere is it evident that Mrs. Lang verified the information supplied or even made critical comment on it. One amusing example comes from an interview with a Mr. Lyle McAdam who tells how his father made a trip from Langley to the Royal City Market by row boat in half an hour! I'm sure anyone who has travelled from Langley to New Westminster by high-powered automobile on a high speed freeway would find it difficult to match this feat. Perhaps Mr. McAdam forgot to mention that his father's row boat was built with a three point hydroplane hull and equipped with a 135 horsepower outboard motor. I'm sure Margaret Lang would have dutifully recorded this information had it been offered.

Although many photographs of the early settlers and their homes are scattered throughout the book, no maps of the area are included, no drawings of the Indians or their culture have been attempted, and no graphs, diagrams, charts or other such documentation is present.

The author did attempt some historical comment of her own--45 pages as compared to 155 pages of personal interviews. The small town weekly newspaperwoman in Margaret Lang seems to rule this area as well. At the beginning of the book is a description of Indian life on Semiahmoo Bay. Instead of telling us about some of the archaeological evidence available on this area, or even letting us in on the name of the village or the people themselves, Margaret Lang offers us a pot-pourri of mushy phrases: "the

natural endowment of the climate, water and land" or "this favoured place which provided so well for the needs of living and raising their young" (p. 9).

She goes on to relate the legend of how the city of White Rock was named. The legend is interesting and just intrigues one enough to raise one's curiosity as to where it originates and by whom it was first related. Unfortunately, the author, in her consistently unhistoric manner, fails to bore the reader with any supporting evidence or documentation.

Mrs. Lang strikes the final blow to the punch-drunk body of historical viability with a below the belt, typical tourist promotion punch line when describing the future of the area: "a vigorous municipality and a thriving city looks ahead, spurred by the promise of an exciting, colourful future in fulfilling the destiny of the area by developing its potential into one of the most attractive salt water resorts of British Columbia and perhaps, all of Canada" (p. 9).

If you are a local resident and want to read about your neighbors or find out where all their descendants are now living, then read Margaret Lang's Anthology; if you want to read a history of the early days of White Rock and district, look elsewhere.

John Pollard
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The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810-1914: A Study of British Maritime Ascendancy. Barry M. Gough. Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 1971. Pp. xvi, 294, illus., maps. \$12.50.

The role of the Royal Navy in the development of the American Northwest has been largely ignored, or relegated to lesser significance, in the majority of histories of this region. Mr. Gough does a fine job of demonstrating that this organization played not only an important, but perhaps even a decisive role in the evolution of British interests in this area. It was here that American, British and Russian expansionism met and in some cases clashed. It is Mr. Gough's thesis that British Naval dominance in this area

was principally responsible for the survival of British trading interests as well as the possession of the west coast by the Dominion of Canada. The Royal Navy was a direct extension of British interests in this area. The importance of the navy in such incidents as the Oregon Boundary dispute, Crimean War and the San Juan dispute is fully substantiated and the resulting implications are clearly set forth. The British Navy and the Admiralty policies it executed, constituted the instrument which guaranteed British sovereignty during periods such as the Gold Rush years when American filibustering, under the threatening hand of Manifest Destiny, threatened to engulf the sparsely populated expanses of what would become the British Columbian Interior.

The author also spends considerable time tracing the birth and growth of the Naval establishment at Esquimalt. The growth of British naval interests in the North Pacific as well as the problems which arose out of the gold rushes, coupled with strained Anglo-American relations during the Civil War are cited as the primary reasons for Esquimalt being designated the Pacific station headquarters of the Royal Navy.

The volume itself proves to be both fast and easy reading, pleasantly interrupted by a number of illustrations of naval ships and personnel who played prominent roles in the book's narrative. An ample appendix provides some interesting, although perhaps not terribly useful information on ships and complements in this area from 1847 to 1867. The importance which the Admiralty placed upon the establishment at Esquimalt is illustrated in one appendix which shows the distribution of Royal Naval vessels throughout the world from 1861 to 1874.

It would seem evident therefore that the role of Royal Navy in the defense and development of "the West beyond the West" up to the time of the Canadian Naval Service Act in 1910 cannot be underestimated. In short Mr. Gough's book presents a well documented view of the part of British Maritime

supremacy in an area of our history which has been little developed.

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