

This, however, is nit-picking. There are two more serious weaknesses. The fascinating narrative comes to an abrupt halt without a comparison of the Trent project with other canal-building projects and public works, or with the development of tourism or of hydro-power elsewhere in Canada. There is not even a recapitulation of themes. A more satisfying conclusion would also inform the reader about what has happened to the Trent since 1920. The author writes: "Given the millions of dollars it has poured into the economy, to say nothing of the thousands of man-hours of pleasure it has given to its users, the canal is worth every cent the politicians reluctantly spent on it" (406). Readers outside Ontario may not understand this point at all.

Although Prof. Angus is sensitive to the injustice of ethnic bigotry, he almost replicates the problem himself, because he cannot refrain from ethnic stereotyping. He implies that all Scots are "stubborn" (41), "tight-fisted" (145), "self-righteous" (146), "laconic" (174) and "frugal" (326). Nevertheless, he makes unexplained exceptions. For many years, the two operators of the Big Chute Marine Railway (one of them the author's father) were Scots. When Scotty and Jack are called "charming", "conscientious and dedicated", "friendly, co-operative...helpful" and witty (395-396), apparently with none of the aforementioned weaknesses, credibility is strained. Ethnic stereotypes (when not actually insulting) are clumsy tools of description or analysis. Where "the rule" is applied, one suspects prejudice, just as much as when it is not applied and exceptions are made.

These flaws aside, Prof. Angus' book, because of its lively style, attention to detail and narrative power, deserves to be in both university and public, as well as private, libraries.

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Peter Baskerville — *The Bank of Upper Canada*. Toronto: Champlain Society and Carleton University Press, 1987. Pp. clii, 397.

Over the past few years, in the general expansion of interest in Canadian business history, several studies focusing upon the history of individual chartered banks have appeared. This reviewer, like others who have pursued the path of banking history, has concentrated largely upon banks which still exist, or, failing that, has chosen institutions which were absorbed by banks that still function. The historical records of ongoing institutions have usually been retained in corporate archives. Accordingly, by choosing to study the right bank, the researcher could put himself in a position to be able to examine such crucial documents as internal correspondence or the minutes of the meetings of directors.

In this context, one has to give full credit to Peter Baskerville for having had the courage to take on the history of the Bank of Upper Canada. The first chartered bank in Ontario began its operations in 1822 before passing from the scene, in 1866, when its affairs were liquidated. Occasionally, the records of such liquidated banks have mysteriously made their way into archival collections. This possibility was precluded in the case of the Bank of Upper Canada when its papers were sold off to a paper

manufacturer in the 1870s at \$20 per ton. As Baskerville notes, "Doubtless many private and public figures breathed a sigh of relief after the sale" (ix).

He was able to pass such judgement on the basis of an exhaustive examination of the documents relating to the history of this bank that could be collected from a wide range of archival sources. This book employs those documents in two different ways. The bulk of the pages in this volume are taken up with the reproduction of the most important letters, reports and financial statements that Baskerville discovered. The history of the Bank of Upper Canada has always been shrouded in a certain mystery due to the destruction of its corporate records, but now, thanks to the publication of this material, documents relating to this institution are, ironically, more readily accessible to students of Canadian business history than those of any other bank.

In addition to the reproduction of these documents, this volume also contains Baskerville's book-length discussion of the history of the bank. This discussion is modestly called an introduction to the documents, but in fact, it is a first-rate analysis of one of the major financial institutions of the pre-Confederation period. The author manages to overcome the problems created by the absence of corporate records largely because he is not interested in simply describing the history of the institution. Rather, Baskerville's goal is to deal with two major issues that have long interested Canadian economic historians.

The first of these issues pertains to the relationship between business and government. This question is of particular relevance to the Bank of Upper Canada since it was widely denounced by William Lyon Mackenzie in the years leading up to the Rebellions of 1837 as the tool of the Family Compact. Baskerville convincingly shows that this claim was unfounded. The bank was not chartered as the government's financial agent, and nothing that occurred under the presidency of William Allan between 1822 and 1835 brought the bank any closer to the state. This situation began to change, however, under Allan's successors who aggressively sought increased government business for the bank, a strategy that ultimately resulted in the Bank of Upper Canada being made the official banker of the Province of Canada, in 1850. Unfortunately, as Baskerville shows, the securing of this position coincided with the involvement of the government in the financing of railway development. The bank overextended itself in aiding both the government and the railways, and when the economy went into a tailspin in the late 1850s, the bank's fortunes declined. Baskerville describes the bank as "moribund" by 1860 (cxxix), and efforts at its revival, including the virtual appointment of a new manager by the finance minister, could not preclude its closure in 1866.

In charting the relationship of the bank with the state, Baskerville offers a number of useful insights. First, he carefully forces historians to rethink their simplistic assumptions that businessmen and government officials formed part of an undifferentiated elite which directed both political and economic affairs. Rather, Baskerville provides numerous examples of the difficulties inherent in the relationship between the bank and the state, precisely because each had its own priorities. Moreover, the author provides an excellent analysis of exactly how the financial system worked, or did not work, during this period. More particularly, he shows how the government moved away from an informal, decentralized system for the transaction of its affairs to one with greater central control. In that earlier system, the bank would frequently be hurt when it provided advances to government departments for

expenditures that had not been approved by any central authority. In such a situation, the bank could be stuck holding the bag. By the 1860s, with the rise of a modern industrial economy, more formal means of accounting and bookkeeping were introduced, but this also frequently worked against the interests of the bank. Just as it found itself in deep difficulty and in desperate need of the tolerance of the government, more efficient business practices justified the decision to drop it as the government's banker in 1864, a decision that led to its demise shortly thereafter.

In addition to the issue of government-business relations, Baskerville also deals with the question of the role of the bank as an agent contributing to the emergence of an "industrial economy" (xci). While the bank, especially under Allan, committed itself to a tight-money policy oriented to the movement of staples, his successors were more adventurous, particularly in their deep involvement in mortgage lending and in the financing of railways. These practices were unwise since they tied up the assets of the bank for long periods of time with the result that depositors and other creditors could not easily be repaid. Baskerville does not clearly explain, however, how these lending practices were designed to contribute to industrial development. Railway ventures, for instance, were launched primarily for the movement of staples, and while they had a profound effect upon later industrial development, it is not clear that the bank's leaders were consciously promoting the transformation of the economy. In most cases, Baskerville does well in integrating his findings into the larger literature on the issue at hand. In this particular instance, however, he needed to clarify his interpretation by making direct reference to the studies touching upon the role of commercial and industrial capital in the transformation of the nineteenth-century Canadian economy.

Regardless of the willingness of the bank to encourage the emergence of an industrial economy, it is hard to understand exactly why the bank's management chose during the 1840s and 1850s to support "general growth and structural change" since Baskerville shows that such policies worked against the stability of all Upper Canadian banks, the Bank of Upper Canada included (cli). Why did no one in the banking community come to the conclusion that pursuing a smaller and safer business was the wise course to follow? More particularly, why did the leaders of the Bank of Upper Canada not choose to follow a different course for their institution?

Such quibbles are raised with considerable reluctance since the author was forced to labour under the inconvenience of lacking any of the internal documentation of the bank. In any event, these are minor issues that do not in any way detract from Baskerville's generally outstanding analysis of the history of an important financial institution.

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Joseph Bergin — *Cardinal de La Rochefoucauld: Leadership and Reform in the French Church*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987. Pp. viii, 302.

If scholars no longer seriously doubt that the Counter-Reformation entailed something more than an effort to repress Protestantism, a clear scholarly consensus