

was theft, usually of wood or grain. The peasants saw theft from each other to be immoral but regarded the grain and wood of the Gagarins as their own. The beatings were an unpleasant part of life and were accepted as such.

Hoch's interpretation of the peasant commune and the patriarchal family does much to revise our picture of this vital aspect of life in Imperial Russia. He argues, "In the end, far outweighing the economic exploitation of the landlord was the social oppression of serf over serf" (160). His study, however, covers only one village in one area of a vast empire throughout which serfdom existed. Other such studies, in other areas, are needed before generalization can be made.

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Kris R. Inwood — *The Canadian Charcoal Iron Industry, 1870-1914*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1986. Pp. ix, 398.

Kris Inwood's *Canadian Charcoal Iron Industry* is not, as its title might imply, a general history of Canadian charcoal iron in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is instead a more narrowly defined analysis of two closely related historical issues: why — when elsewhere in Europe and United States charcoal iron production declined in the mid-nineteenth century — did this seemingly antiquated industry survive in Canada, and why, more specifically, did Canadian charcoal iron outputs diminish significantly in the 1870s and 1880s then increase again in the 1890s, peaking in 1913. The author argues that the contributions made through scholarly examinations of charcoal iron to an understanding of technological diffusion, the survival of "old" technologies, and eighteenth and nineteenth century industrialization have made charcoal iron a "celebrated industry" (i). Inwood contends that the major addition his analysis makes to the international literature on charcoal iron is the identification of several key changes in charcoal iron smelting and in the production of charcoal whose importance to the industry was not previously recognized. Implications from the study for Canadian economic history are equally, if not more, interesting. For example, Inwood concludes that despite popular assumptions, scientific advance did not ultimately discriminate between old industries and new. Scientific discoveries benefitted both coke iron and the traditional industry, charcoal iron. Perhaps the same pattern occurred in other industries.

Technology was central to charcoal iron's fate, as were markets. The industry's decline before 1890 can be explained in part by competition created by technical changes which reduced costs and enhanced quality in the production of steel and coke iron. Also significant were discoveries of new ways to substitute coke iron for charcoal iron in foundry work. Charcoal iron possessed hitherto unique advantages of low cost, resistance to stress, light weight, and a capacity to assume intricate shapes. These helped the industry survive through the lean years, with tariff protection perhaps assisting. Nevertheless, by the 1870s other products shared many of these qualities. Canadian charcoal iron's salvation came through the adoption of new techniques in the 1890s. These included the introduction of superheated, "hard-driven" furnace blasts and re-designed charcoal kilns which created both marketable by-products and charcoal which did not disintegrate despite both long distance transportation by rail and the heavy blast furnace tonnages now possible with charcoal's new load-bearing capacities.

These techniques had nevertheless been available in the United States since the 1870's. Why had they not reached Canada then and why had older techniques instead persisted? The answer was not, for example, that Canadian iron masters were in any respect less progressive. Quebec ironmakers, for instance, were active participants in the United States based Association of Charcoal Iron Workers, which vigorously promoted new technology; Quebec ironmakers were in all certainty beneficiaries of a healthy international flow of technical information. Nor did entrepreneurial aversion to risk-taking

explain technological lag. Such attitudes were not in evidence. The original techniques survived because the new techniques became cost-effective only at levels of production above those permitted by the markets available in the 1870s and 1880s. Innovation became desirable only with the larger scale production made possible beginning in the 1890s with expanded domestic demand for charcoal iron (largely in railway and agricultural implement applications) and subsequently with the growth of chemical industries exploiting by-products created by the new techniques of hardwood distillation. The new cost-effective techniques of the type developed in the United States finally made sense — so much so as to revitalize charcoal iron in Canada. The rapid resurgence of the industry, Inwood notes cautiously, is “disquietingly reminiscent of themes that economic historians during the last two decades have learned to reject: that Canadian development after Confederation was characterized by depression and slow manufacturing growth during the 1870s and 1880s, followed by a ‘take-off’ about the turn of the century” (110).

Inwood’s positive findings are in some respects less interesting than his negative arguments. Inasmuch as traditional analyses of the iron industry, briefs held more specifically for the effectiveness of National Policy protection, and new arguments centering on patterns of capital investment each contribute to our overall perceptions of late nineteenth century Canadian industry, they have considerable significance. W. J. Donald’s seventy-three year old study of the Canadian iron and steel industry is, for one, a source still frequently cited. Inwood is justifiably skeptical of Donald’s beliefs that Quebec charcoal iron suffered from the effects of diminishing ore and charcoal wood supplies aggravated by slow rail construction, poor domestic markets, and weak capital supplies. He is also unconvinced in general by stock notions in Canadian history that raw materials manufacturing industries can be understood largely by reference to domestic resource endowments or transportation developments. He comments that such time-worn enthusiasms that one led A.R.M. Lower to remark flatly that “Canada is primarily a transportation route” (36), may in fact have had much to do, ultimately, with the numbers of Royal Commissions formed over the years whose subject was transportation.

Inwood finds explanations centering on the National Policy tariff equally unsatisfying. In the first place, the delay between imposition of the tariff and the revival of the charcoal iron industry makes correlation of cause and effect difficult. It is difficult to state with any certainty whether revitalization of the charcoal iron industry stemmed from protection or instead from conditions created by the low tariff environment prior to the imposition of the National Policy. Nevertheless, it does appear reasonable to conclude that the industry’s expansion came too slowly to have been caused by protection. As well, Inwood believes that the protection afforded high cost, low technology charcoal iron plants by tariffs may have helped delay introduction of plants employing new technology capable of larger production at lower costs. The indications are, in addition, that sale of charcoal by-products would have made the new technology profitable even without protection. One point is certain: the industry’s prosperity came too early to be explained by the Wheat Boom. Perhaps the most that tariffs did was to create a “zone of security” that eliminated some uncertainties from manufacturers’ realm of consideration and thus served eventually as an additional inducement to industrialists to undertake risks associated with the limited capacities of late nineteenth century metallurgical analysis. Tariffs remained a decidedly secondary factor.

One of the most satisfying of Inwood’s achievements is his critique of the “Sectoral Immobility Hypothesis”: the now familiar theory that nineteenth century Canada’s presumed failure to shift from commercial to industrial capitalism arose from a failure of financial and mercantile capitalists to invest in industry — thus leaving Canada “trapped” in a staples economy. Inwood quotes with approval Hugh G. Aitken’s comment that a primary accomplishment of Canadian economic historians “has been the creation of an imposing edifice of generalizations on decidedly inadequate foundations” (21). The author considers the Sectoral Immobility Hypothesis both in its traditional versions and new modifications influenced heavily by Marxist theories of class analysis and what he terms “a Marxist stage theory of development” (12). While Inwood believes that the Sectoral Immobility Hypothesis is (as it stands) inherently implausible, he corroborates his argument with an extended survey of finance and ownership in nineteenth century Canadian manufacturing. The result is an

impressive catalogue of mercantile, financial, and manufacturing linkages which is itself of considerable value for the relationships it illuminates, quite apart from its contributions to the present argument. The analysis demonstrates significant levels of commercial leadership and investment in virtually every field of Canadian industry, including iron and steel. Particularly interesting are the accounts of financial relations in the Quebec iron and steel industry, which describe the structural characteristics of finance and investment with unusual clarity. Inwood argues that within the primary iron industries, Canada possessed a "mercantile and financial capitalist class" which "was surprisingly aggressive". Many of the possibilities for industrial development "were [first] investigated by foreign investors and then abandoned, only to be promoted later by evidently risk-taking Canadian merchants, financial entrepreneurs and their bankers" (279).

It is impossible to do justice here to what is, for the most part, a complex, tightly reasoned argument displaying a strong appreciation for fine nuances. Readers may have some questions, owing to the size of the industry, as to the wisdom of posing general hypotheses on the basis of the behaviour displayed by the small number of charcoal iron manufacturers active in Canada. Profitability entailed complex calculations of cost benefit at the firm level, and it could be argued that there is no certainty that a significant percentage of entrepreneurs may not have acted in defiance of economic logic — although Inwood believes that the "characteristics peculiar to any of the small number of firms do not" nevertheless "undermine the presumption of individual maximization by investors" (126). In lieu of alternatives, the author can support assumptions of rationality only by asserting that no clear opposing evidence exists and, perhaps more convincingly, by the accumulation of anecdotes that strongly suggest activity guided by a secure grasp of the economic variables. Because the body of the book consists largely of densely reasoned analytical argument rather than straightforward narrative, readers interested in a general overview of the industry will be greatly disappointed. On a more serious level, survival of the industry through the lean years of 1870 to 1890 is less thoroughly explained than subsequent prosperity. A commendable caution sometimes blunts some of the most provocative attacks on conventional wisdom. And one study of one decidedly small industry cannot alone revise basic assumptions about nineteenth century Canadian industry (not that this was the intention). The findings are nonetheless powerfully suggestive.

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M.E. James — *Society, Politics and Culture. Studies in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. Pp. vii, 483.

The essays that M.E. James has collected in *Society, Politics and Culture* have, with one exception, been published before. Indeed, half of them were published by the Past and Present Society, either in their journal or in their special supplement series and four others have appeared in regional historical publications. Only the last essay, on the Essex revolt, is new. The publication of this collection is especially timely. The dominant Eltonian interpretation of the politics of Henrician England has been subjected to serious revision by David Starkey and others; J.J. Scarisbrick has cast new and valuable light on the Reformation, especially its social dimensions; and historians of sixteenth-century politics finally are treating the "minor" Tudors as major political figures. Thus, the republication of the James' essays, which constitute most of his writings, is particularly welcome.

The publication of this retrospective collection provides the opportunity to examine the author's historiographical development over the period 1966-83. His earliest works, published in the mid-1960s, were three essays focused on the magnates of the Henrician North: "Change and continuity in the Tudor north: Thomas first Lord Wharton" (Chapter III), "A Tudor magnate and the Tudor state: Henry fifth earl of Northumberland" (Chapter II), and "The first earl of Cumberland (1493-1542) and the decline of northern feudalism" (Chapter IV). But their significance lay less in the