

put fort bien favoriser l'intégration géographique et économique du Canada sans pour autant souscrire aux méthodes du Pacifique canadien. Macdonald et Stephen seraient donc pas les seuls à posséder cette perspective intégralement canadienne tant vantée par leurs biographes et par leurs admirateurs.

À part une conception simpliste de son sujet, la biographie déçoit parce qu'elle ne présente pas le cadre dans lequel fonctionnait Stephen. Cette lacune est d'autant plus grave que d'emblée madame Gilbert se refusa à étudier la personnalité du capitaliste. Et pourtant, puisqu'elle ne pouvait pas écrire une biographie typique, faute de documentation, il lui incombait d'examiner Stephen dans le contexte du monde des affaires à l'époque de la politique nationale. On pense à l'article de Dolores Greenberg, récemment paru dans la *Canadian Historical Review* (vol. LVII, n° I), comme modèle de ce genre d'étude.

Madame Greenberg y décrit l'univers restreint de l'élite économique canadienne. Elle souligne l'importance de leur ascendance écossaise, de leurs intérêts économiques centrés sur Montréal, de leur lien avec le parti conservateur. Jusqu'ici, rien de neuf. Mais, ce sont justement ces traits qui permirent à l'élite canadienne de pénétrer le monde des affaires newyorkais et londonien. La construction du chemin de fer *St Paul and Pacific* au Minnesota fut pour Stephen un épisode-clé parce qu'il put par la suite faire appel au marché de capitaux américains pour financer le Pacifique canadien. Le chemin de fer transcontinental ne fut, pas plus que les manufactures nées du tarif de 1879, une entreprise canadienne. Il y a à travers l'exposé de madame Greenberg le souci de nous décrire les rapports qui existaient entre les banquiers, les syndicats de faillite et les porteurs d'obligations.

C'est ce genre d'étude qui rend intelligible l'histoire du chemin de fer, sans quoi nous ne serions pas plus éclairés que ce pauvre actionnaire qui en 1877 exigea de Stephen une justification de l'emprunt que celui-ci fit à même les fonds de la Banque de Montréal pour acquérir le *St Paul and Pacific*. Stephen lui conseilla en propres termes de se mêler de ses affaires. Aussi, l'article de madame Greenberg fait vivre cette époque en saisissant toute la dynamique du monde des affaires.

On ne rendrait pas justice à madame Gilbert sans reconnaître le mérite de *Awakening Continent*. Ce livre, mieux que tout autre, décrit en détail les péripéties du Pacifique canadien, tant sur les marchés de Londres et de New York que sur la scène politique canadienne. Il jette aussi une lumière sur les projets que Stephen conçut pour transporter les pauvres immigrants d'Écosse et d'Irlande au Canada. Somme toute, cependant, *Awakening Continent* intéressera surtout les passionnés de l'histoire ferroviaire.

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BARBARA M. WILSON, ed. — *Ontario and the First World War 1914-1918: A Collection of Documents*. Toronto: The Champlain Society for the Government of Ontario; University of Toronto Press, 1977. Pp. cxix, 201.

We fear that if Canada is to continue to shed her life blood ... there will not be many Canadians remaining to celebrate the conquest And more than that, we have grave fears that if this horrible conflict goes on for another two years we shall not have our United Empire to cheer for What our Empire needs right now and what Canada needs right now is PEACE It is

about time for Canadians to wake up and realize that they are living in America and not Europe ... Canada will contribute more to the future greatness of the Anglo-Saxon race by pursuing her own ideals and minding her own business on this side of the Atlantic than by sending 'her last son and her last dollar' across the water in a futile effort to adjust the wrongs which most of our ancestors left the old world to escape (pp. 36-37).

Those untypical words were the meat of an editorial published in the *Sault Express* in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, on June 23, 1916. They stand out as a contrast to the rhetoric of war that made up the steady diet that the people of Ontario received from their press, their schools and their churches all through four terrible years of the Great War. And they were responsible for the seizure of the *Express*' press and plant and the destruction of all copies of the offending issue by the censor on the grounds that the *Express*' editorial was detrimental to recruiting.

And it was. To speak the truth in the midst of the excesses that passed for reasoned discourse in the middle of the war was to dissuade men from volunteering for service overseas. To show newsreels that offered genuine pictures of the front and the carnage it visited on the men of the Canadian Expeditionary Force would similarly discourage recruiting. "Only faked battle scenes and scenes considered to be pro-German were censored until June, 1915, when the ban was extended to include any scenes of war, whether real or faked," Ms. Wilson tells us, "because of the adverse effect they might have on recruiting. It was, however, permissible to show pictures of 'troops marching, with bands playing and colours flying'" (pp. xlii-xliii). The wonder is that casualty lists were permitted, so delicate and liable to upset was the public temper.

Indeed, despite the editor's continuously upbeat introduction, the uneasy state of public opinion emerges very clearly from this collection of documents. Morale was good in 1914, Barbara Wilson says, good in 1915, 1916, 1917, and 1918, too. The people were tired but confident. Their spirits stayed firm. They worked hard and contributed all they could to the war. Ontario's government and citizenry did their utmost for the great cause. And yet, the documents and the introduction, too, belie the undiluted optimism. At the onset of the war, Ms. Wilson tells us, the rural districts of the province lacked the enthusiasm of the cities — the editor says that "the excitement was less visible" — a state of affairs that lasted a good long time and one that made recruiting in farm districts very difficult. In 1915, recruiters reported problems in persuading the young men of Ontario to "leave their families, their jobs, and their pleasures to fight in yet another European war". Too many of those who did volunteer were English-born, we are told in a footnote, something that also says much about attitudes and responses. In early 1917, the campaign to get National Service cards filled in and returned was a failure (a judgment of Ms. Wilson's that could be quarrelled with), presumably yet another indication of a reluctance to assist the federal government in its efforts to determine available manpower reserves or a sign of lowering morale. And in 1918, when 838 men of the first Canadian contingent received furloughs to return to Canada and when, in the spring, the government proposed to return them to the front, 41 Toronto area survivors passed a resolution that they be permitted to remain at home. These few examples — there are dozens of others in this book including the quite extraordinary story of the divisions that tore apart Berlin and made it Kitchener — suggest that morale in Ontario was likely not so good or opinion so solidly pro-war as Barbara Wilson suggests. The evidence presented could, in fact, be interpreted in a radically different way to suggest that the elite groups in society, the parliamentarians, the rich and the prominent, the clergy, school principals and editorialists all favoured the war while the people were

less certain in their responses. Troubled and unsure, almost certainly wanting to do the right thing, the ordinary men and women gave their best effort. But after two or three years, effort hurts and the rewards of the war, few as they may have been, seemed to fall to the rich. The high costs, the hard labour, the rural depopulation that obsessed the farmers, and the casualties, of course, fell overwhelmingly on the labourers and farmers who made up three-quarters of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

This inference, and it is only that, has to be surmised from *Ontario and the First World War*. The documents here, culled from a very substantial range of public and private collections in a number of archives, are a tribute to the energy of Barbara Wilson. As the expert at the Public Archives of Canada on military records, Ms. Wilson has been an invaluable aide to dozens of researchers. Now in this collection she has brought her unrivalled knowledge to bear and produced a very good book of documents.

But as I have suggested, the introduction does not always seem to square with the documents themselves, and too often the material selected shows only the views, attitudes and responses of the *prominenti*. It is, naturally enough, the Cabinet ministers, the colonels, the bureaucrats and the editors who produced the material that reached the archives, and their views seem to be the ones that survive. It is now probably impossible to unearth the anti-war feelings, the sullen apathy and grumbling that usually characterize any large mass of people. Fallible human memory screens out the exhaustion, the depressing periods, and all that remains are the vague flickering memories of the happy songs, the good times, good partying, and perhaps the Armistice day celebrations when you kissed a girl you'd never seen before on the Yonge Street tram. Ms. Wilson faced an impossible task of reconstruction here, and if she was unable to carry it off who could have done better?

Where some might quarrel with her work is in the broad selection of categories of documents. She studies the home front, loyalty, women, schools, universities, blacks and Indians, and a few minor areas. All are interesting, all are useful. But why not immigrant groups and the Wartime Elections Act? industrialization and reconstruction planning? the activities of the provincial government and provincial politics? Why not the broad question of the Franco-Ontarians, their schools, their recruiting problems, and the whole matter of their relations during the war with English-speaking Ontario? Why not the trade union movement, the United Farmers, the question of rural depopulation, the efforts at rehabilitating soldiers? There are obvious difficulties in separating out the Ontario role from the national effort on some of these subjects (as there are in those that are printed) but to omit the whole area of the Franco-Ontarians, for example, seems to be a grievous flaw.

Also troubling is the relentless focus on the elite that sometimes blurs the picture. In the section on women, to cite only one example, we are told a good deal about war work in factories, but always from officials, reports, or the like and we learn nothing about the complaints and grievances that led to protests over working conditions. "They are killing us off as fast as they are killing the men in the trenches," one woman worker told the *Toronto Star* (quoted in Janice Acton, *et al.*, eds. *Women at Work: Ontario, 1850-1930*. Toronto: Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1974, p. 282), a complaint that suggests a strong and many-sided vein of protest, one that might profitably have been probed.

But it is easy, too easy, to suggest that the author should have produced her book my way. What we do have here is a good selection of documents from

a wide range of sources. The introduction is clear and straightforward, a valuable addition to the literature on Ontario and the Great War. In addition, the volume is a handsome one, well laid out and illustrated with some first-rate photographs.

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LEWIS H. THOMAS, ed. — *William Aberhart and Social Credit in Alberta*. Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing, 1977. Pp. 175.

William Aberhart and Social Credit in Alberta is one of a number of new additions to the *Issues in Canadian History* series under the general editorship of J. L. Granatstein. Lewis H. Thomas provides an introductory chapter before presenting selections from primary and secondary sources in six chapters, each in turn with its own introduction. The first is a character sketch of Aberhart, the second a description of the depression's impact upon Alberta, and the third an examination of the complex relationship between the United Farmers of Alberta Government and the social credit evangelist. The stunning victory of the young Social Credit Party in the 1935 election is the subject of chapter four, while the final chapters deal with Aberhart's years as premier, concluding with his death in 1943.

Professor Thomas has made full use of sources untapped by earlier writers on social credit in Alberta, in particular the premier's files at the Provincial Archives of Alberta and the W. N. Smith papers at the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, and he has done much more than assemble a collection of documents. In the hands of academic authors, William Aberhart has been at best a demagogue and at worst a quasi-Fascist, while in the reminiscences of friends and supporters readers have been assured of his sainthood. Thomas proposes instead "to evaluate social credit in the light of Aberhart's accomplishments in office, rather than in the shadow of the rhetoric of defenders and critics" (p. 9). The result is a rather different interpretation of Aberhart than that to which we have become accustomed. Although Thomas makes no attempt to conceal Aberhart's "warts" — his flair for demagoguery, his political showmanship or his authoritarianism — he goes further to point out the legislative achievements of Aberhart's eight years in office. Thomas makes clear that the UFA government which Aberhart crushed, far from being an embryonic C.C.F. regime, was "no more radical or innovative than the neighbouring Liberal government of Saskatchewan" (p. 11) and that Aberhart was responsible for more significant progressive legislation. Thomas' conclusion that "under Aberhart a social welfare state was established" (p. 91) in Alberta seems to overstate the case, however. Aberhart's Alberta did not have a government program of medical care, for example, despite the Premier's expressed support for one. Still, this well-written and carefully presented rehabilitation of our image of Aberhart, which emphasizes the reform roots of social credit, deserves serious consideration.

The book does have some problems. A few errors, some typographical, have crept into the text. The Regina Manifesto does not date from 1938, nor was Aberhart the first or the only Canadian politician to make effective use of the radio. Although the selections from primary material are judiciously chosen, those from published sources have been chosen to illustrate Professor Thomas' interpretation. Thus C. B. Macpherson's *Democracy in Alberta* is excerpted only once while the memoirs of A. J. Hooke, a Social Credit M.L. A., appear four times. Authors of various selections are not always clearly identified for the reader who may be