

Ralph T. Pastore,¹ who argues that the British, being far better equipped to provide for the Indians, had by the end of 1778, securely attached the majority of the Six Nations (including defectors from the pro-American Oneidas and Tuscaroras) to the King's cause.

As one counterweight to the attraction of British goods the Americans utilized the services of the missionary Samuel Kirkland whose influence among the Oneidas cannot be challenged. One wonders, however, why the author repeats the charge that Kirkland refused to baptize children (even dying infants) of unregenerate parents (p. 56) without repeating the missionary's reply that no one other than an Indian of a "most infamous character" had ever accused him of such rigidity. Except on this one point, Professor Graymont's account of Kirkland's role in attaching the Oneidas to the Americans appears correct although it is possible that some past disagreements between the Oneidas and the Johnsons worked to Kirkland's advantage. In March 1756, a French force destroyed the English forts, Bull and William, in the heart of the Oneida territory. The Oneidas had chosen not to warn either the commanders of the forts or Sir William Johnson of M. de Léry's approach. Twelve years later, after the French had met final defeat and the British were attempting to solve the Indian problem, it was the Oneidas who strongly objected to the establishment of the Fort Stanwix Treaty Line so far west. They had wanted it to be to the eastward so that they would have complete control of the Great Oneida Carrying Place. Their attitude on the question was basically the same as that of the Senecas who had zealously sought to maintain their rights at the Niagara portage in the days of the French Régime but by 1768 one of the European contenders for Iroquois allies had been eliminated and the Oneidas were unsuccessful. It is conceivable that they never forgave the architect of the treaty, Sir William Johnson, or his family.

Minor differences based on interpretation and emphasis do not, however, detract from the basic value of the work. As a result of the rising tide of interest in the North American Indian, it is hoped that a number of sound scholarly studies will be forthcoming. Those who have any intention of producing such works would do well to emulate Barbara Graymont.

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MALVINA BOLUS, editor. — *People and Pelts. Selected Papers of the Second North American Fur Trade Conference*, Winnipeg, Peguis Publishers, 1972.

Many historians, for different reasons, will express disappointment with the selection of articles in this publication. This statement should not be

¹ "The Board of Commissioners for Indian Affairs in the Northern Department and the Iroquois Indians, 1775-1778," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Notre-Dame, 1972.

construed as a criticism of the editor. Given the nature of the Conference at which these papers were presented and the diverse interests of those who attended, Malvina Bolus has performed the editor's role of selection and presentation in an excellent fashion. Her years of experience as editor of *The Beaver*, during which time the magazine became one of the most widely read and respected publications in its field, are reflected in the book's pleasing format and its relevant and profuse illustrations. Why, then, should many scholars express disappointment? In small measure the answer may be found in the nature of the papers. But perhaps a more fundamental cause is the manner in which *People and Pelts* reflects the nature and present state of scholarly inquiry into the fur trade.

Consciously or unconsciously the metropolitan perspective has dominated historical writing on the fur trade. The value of this approach can not be denigrated. The metropolitan perspective has permitted historians to make an effective and an efficient use of the primary sources available. It has provided useful conclusions furthering our understanding of the fur trade and, at the same time, indicated areas requiring more extensive research. Four papers in *People and Pelts* reflect this traditional approach and its continuing usefulness. K. G. Davies' paper, "The Years of No Dividend: Finances of the Hudson's Bay Company 1690-1718," examines the related questions, why there was a dividend-freeze extending for twenty-eight years, and why the Company did not, as others did, experience increasing indebtedness, resulting in insolvency. Sensitive to the limitations of his evidence, Davies concludes that particular circumstances and the policy of the Governing Committee serve to explain the Company's survival. The stockholder's acceptance of the policy of the Governing Committee is explained in terms of the concentration of the Company's stock in the hands of increasingly fewer proprietors. Davies characterizes this era in the Company's History, in London, as "the sleep of the proprietors on their frozen stock."

Another paper concerned with the "London" end of the fur trade, Murray G. Lawson's "The Beaver Hat and the Fur Trade" adds little to our knowledge of the relationship between the fur market in London and the acquisition of furs in British North West America. In view of the conclusions suggested in Abraham Rotstein's "The Two Economies of the Hudson's Bay Company," a paper presented at the conference but not included in this volume, one may well question the "directness" of such a relationship. Lawson's paper, however, serves to highlight the emphasis on "staple" fur as opposed to "fancy" fur during the hey-day of the fur trade.

Continuing in the traditional view of historical writing on the fur trade, Rhonda R. Gilman's paper "Last Days of the Upper Mississippi Fur Trade" examines the two decades of transition, 1834-54, in the region under study. While noting that the business of trading furs did not end with the advent of settlement the nature of the fur trade and the participants in it did change. The Indian and the trader gave way to the pioneer farmer who found furs, chiefly muskrat, a valuable winter cash crop. The capitalists who had

financed and organized the trade took their profits and turned to more fruitful fields of investment, principally timber and real estate. Gilman's paper suggests that similar studies should be undertaken in other regions during the period when settlement was supplanting the fur trade as a way of life.

In essence Elaine A. Mitchell's paper, "Sir George Simpson: The Man of Feeling," confirms A. S. Morton's conclusions in his biography of the Little Emperor. As Morton's study was largely based upon public and business documents some scholars have suggested that only one dimension of Simpson's life appeared. Utilizing a collection of private letters written between the years 1826 and 1860, of which over a hundred were written by Simpson and another hundred were written by Simpson's son-in-law, Angus Cameron, Mitchell suggests some moderation is necessary in terms of the traditional assessment of Simpson. To the author "Jesuitical" is far too strong a term to describe his attachment to the Company. At the same time among friends and associates he emerges as "a warm, urbane and attractive man" whose faults were the excesses of his virtues.

The four historical papers in *People and Pelts* serve to underline the strengths and weaknesses of traditional historical inquiry into the fur trade. The predominance of a metropolitan perspective is obvious. Equally obvious are the benefits that have accrued from this approach. But a void exists — a void that scholars, who view the fur trade solely in traditional terms, can not fill. The fur trade was a politico-economic aspect of imperial expansion. At the same time it was the basis of not one but two distinct ways of life. In the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company and those of the North West Company, Indians, Mixed-bloods and Europeans, men, women and children, drew upon their several cultural legacies and their own particular sequence of experiences in succeeding generations, to evolve two distinct cultural traditions. From a perspective that emphasizes the continuity of experience rooted in the hinterland and focuses upon the social behaviour and cultural ways of the inhabitants, new questions emerge. Documents, such as "Lists of Servants" and "Wills," which historians previously did not use extensively, become central. Traditional sources, such as "Account Books" and "Fort Journals," must be reexamined in a new light. The limited work accomplished to date indicates an intricate social system in which the camaraderie of adult males and kinship ties linking Indians, Mixed-bloods and Europeans were as significant as the hierarchy of rank in structuring the social world of the trading posts. Similar impressions respecting the values, attitudes and modes of behaviour of the inhabitants emerge. From a "hinterland" perspective the Indian can no longer remain a largely inert part of the scenario. As wife, brother-in-law, friend and workmate, the Indian becomes a prominent concern of the historian interested in the social and cultural ways of the trading post. As the scholar cannot understand the European in the trading posts without reference to the ways of his homeland neither can the historian understand the Indian without viewing the ways of the different Indian bands. Quite correctly one may argue that the Indian is the proper

concern of the anthropologist and the ethnologist. Yet the social historian must be familiar with work in these fields if he is to understand the culture of the trading posts. In the book under review a beginning is made.

Three papers in *People and Pelts* attempt to give a readership of historians some appreciation of the Indians' experience in the fur trade. In a wide ranging paper, covering the region between the Saskatchewan and Missouri Rivers during the fur trade period, the noted ethnologist, John C. Ewers, concludes that, rather than being totally disruptive, the fur trade was a positive stimulus to many aspects of the culture of the Northern Plains Indians. In his paper, "Influence of the Fur Trade on Indians of the Northern Plains," Ewers demonstrates that European goods were incorporated into Indian culture and utilized in "Indian ways." Similarly, the trading post, as a bank, as a recreation and social centre, as a general store and as a health and welfare centre, provided an added dimension to the lives of generations of Northern Plains Indians.

Natalie Stoddard's paper "Ethnological Aspects of the Russian Fur Trade" arrives at conclusions similar to Ewers. Stoddard, however, underlines the significant variables of time and place in evaluating the impact of the fur trade on particular Indian peoples. Comparing the impact of the Russian fur trade upon "a wholly dependent" people, the Aleuts, and "an independent" people, the Tlingit, Stoddard finds that, while the Aleuts were virtually annihilated as a cultural group, the Tlingit maintained their cultural independence. With them the Russian fur trade served only to elaborate existing cultural patterns.

Maxwell Paupanekis, a retired Cree trapper from Norway House, in his paper, "The Trapper," tends to confirm the conclusions that emerged in the previous papers. Ranging from the broad view to the narrow and particular concern in the daily life of the trapper, Paupanekis demonstrates the Indian's dependence upon European and Euro-Canadian goods but, at the same time, he notes their utilization in a particular "Indian" fashion. In his closing remarks Paupanekis suggests that the viability of the trapper's way of life is being threatened not only by the depressed prices for furs but by the extension of government services northward. As Paupanekis reveals himself as an intelligent and perceptive observer of passing events it is unfortunate that time and space did not allow him to elaborate on this point.

The remaining two papers in *People and Pelts* are of general interest. Using a case study, Walter Kenyon, in his paper, "White-water Archaeology," dramatically illustrates the value of this line of scholarly inquiry into the fur trade. In a short paper, "Fur Farming in Canada," E. R. Bowness traces the evolution of this modern descendant of the fur trade.

Together the papers in *People and Pelts* constitute a statement as to strengths and weaknesses of historical studies on the fur trade. The continuing usefulness of the traditional approach is evident. The absence of papers

on the social and cultural aspects of the fur trade is apparent. But equally evident is the fact that a beginning is being made. One can hope that at future fur trade conferences the "strengths" will continue and the "weaknesses" disappear.

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ROBIN W. WINKS. — *The Blacks in Canada: A History*, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press; London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 1971.

In his recent book *The Blacks in Canada*, Professor Winks has attempted to record the story of one of Canada's oldest and most historically-neglected ethnic groups. The scope of his book is sweeping, ranging from the institution of slavery in New France to the first meeting of the National Black Coalition in Toronto in 1969. In spite of the breadth of his subject matter Professor Winks initially takes time slowly and painstakingly to sort out the often contradictory legislation which provided an early legal framework for Black slavery in Canada. The 1781 act passed by the General Assembly of Prince Edward Island provides a good example of the legal confusion which existed over the question of slavery in Canada. The act itself was straightforward, simply stating that the baptism of slaves would in no way exempt them from bondage. Casuists in the Assembly, however, argued that the act had no real meaning since slavery as an institution had no legal foundation in the colony. Those who had initiated the legislation quickly replied that the very passage of the act itself recognized that such a foundation must exist. Such circular arguments continued for another forty years until the Assembly reluctantly admitted that "Slavery is sanctioned and permitted within this Island," although "entirely in variance with the laws of England and the freedom of the Country." Winks describes how the ambivalent attitude displayed towards slavery by the Prince Edward Island Assembly was characteristic of the attitudes held in the rest of the British North American colonies. On the one hand Canadians would have liked the moral superiority over their American Neighbours of a completely free society, but on the other hand, they hesitated to pass the necessary legislation so long as a profit margin remained to be considered. It was not until the emancipation edict was passed by the British Parliament in 1833 that the various Canadian assemblies mustered enough courage openly to condemn slavery. One cannot help but wonder if perhaps the promise of reparation payments lay behind this newly found moral courage.

Equally praiseworthy are Professor Winks' attempts to sort out exactly from where Canada received her Black immigrants and why they came. What emerges is a picture which tends to dull — but not fully discredit — the popularly-accepted notion that most of Canada's Black community are