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Review of Essays on the Historical Geography of the Canadian West: Regional Perspectives on the Settlement Process

Frank Tough

University of Saskatchewan

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Essays on the Historical Geography of the Canadian West: Regional Perspectives on the Settlement Process. Edited by L. A. Rosenvall and S. M. Evans. Calgary: Department of Geography, University of Calgary, 1987. Maps, photographs, notes. x + 195 pp. \$14.50.

Essays on the Historical Geography of the Canadian West is a fine example of a department's contribution to regional studies. The eight essays from six contributors in an attractive, readable, and well-bound monograph are a useful addition to western Canadian studies. The essays (Darby, "From River Boat to Raillines: Circulation Patterns in the Canadian West during the Last Quarter of the Nineteenth Century"; Holmes, "The Canmore Corridor, 1880-1914: A Case Study of the Selection and Development of a Pass Site"; Hadley, "Photography, Tourism and the CPR: Western Canada, 1884-1914"; Evans, "The Origin of Ranching in Western Canada: American Diffusion or Victorian Transplant?"; Notzke, "The Past in the Present: Spatial and Landuse Change on Two Indian Reserves"; Rosenvall, "The Transfer of Mormon Culture to Alberta"; and Evans, "The Hutterites in Alberta: Past and Present Settlement Patterns") provide a nice diversity—transport, economy and culture—but the attention of the editors and the use of cartography and historic photographs provide cohesion. The title is misleading because these essays focus on the outcome of the "last quarter of the nineteenth century [which] saw the emergence of a third nucleus of prairie settlement along the foothills of southern Alberta" (p. 3), rather than on western Canada in general.

The existing historical geography of western Canada is largely a description of white settlement after 1870. This volume is a welcome shift, acknowledging, for example, the fur trade's existence prior to the agricultural frontier and its imprint on the region. Although Evan's study of ranching begins with standard perspectives of diffusion and uniqueness, his approach is sophisticated and his comparison of American and Canadian ranching economies is especially use-

ful for appreciating the role of government and the development of ranching in terms of international markets and capital flows. Similarly, Hadley's interesting study on early tourism illustrates that photographic entrepreneurs were "encouraged by the CPR's changing perception of the mountain west (from one of landscape-as-barrier to one of landscape-as-commodity)" (p. 68).

Notzke's essay on the Stoney and Peigan Indian reserves is a contribution to the history and geography of the prairies, especially since research on agricultural settlement has proceeded as if Indians did not exist. Her study provides considerable details, along with valid conceptual interpretations, of treaties, reserve settlement and agriculture, land alienation, and current land issues. All of these topics, along with the question of internal patterns of unequal land control and the effects of resource royalty payment, require more analysis. Because of the attempt to deal with both the Stoney and Peigan, the impact of a geographical contribution has been diluted. Nonetheless, this study should serve as an exemplary approach for future research on Indian reserve land and resource issues.

FRANK TOUGH
Department of Native Studies
University of Saskatchewan