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Review of *The Administration of Dominion Lands, 1870-1930* by Kirk N. Lambrecht

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The Administration of Dominion Lands, 1870-1930. Kirk N. Lambrecht. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1991. ix + 405 pp. \$C40.00.

The lands in Canada's western provinces and northern territories have undergone a tortuous history from the advent of the Confederation to the transferral of Crown land to the prairie provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1930. Numerous parliamentary statutes, and orders in Council promulgated by the Governor in Council, created and defined various land use regulations and amended them frequently. Kirk Lambrecht, a practicing Edmonton lawyer who has spent many years studying the history of land law in western Canada, has presented in this volume a significant collection of materials for the history of the land law from 1870-1930.

The work begins with a useful survey of the main developments in federal land use policies (pp. 1-57). This includes clear and substantive discussions of the land transfers from the Hudson's Bay Company; the property provisions of the Métis settlements and the First Nations treaties; the Torrens land registration system; the school lands; land grants to the Canadian Pacific and other railroad companies including the British Columbian Railway belt and the Peace River Block; the lease of Crown lands for timber licenses and the establishment of forest reserves; mining leases and rights; land grants for homesteading, pre-emption, colonization companies, militia and North-West Mounted Police bounties, and war veterans; open and closed leases, and stock reserves for ranching; and national park reserves.

The major portions of the book comprise Appendixes I and II. Appendix I is a comprehensive list of Orders in Council defining land use regulations organized by topic. Appendix II contains the text of selected statutes and Orders in Council verbatim concerning settlement, the Railway Belt and Peace River Blocks, Indians, Métis and other original settlers, coal mining, timber, ranching and grazing, the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, irrigation, and the Yukon. As a research tool, this section in particular is a literal gold mine. There is also a useful bibliography to the subject areas of land law, a list of statutes, and a guide to case law.

The volume, supported financially by the Law Society of Saskatchewan, and published as Occasional Paper #3 of the Canadian Plains Research Centre, is attractively produced and nearly flawless in its typesetting. Lambrecht has rummaged through the statutes, sessional papers, *Canadian Gazette*, and orders of the Department of the Interior to compile a source of

laws and orders that will be invaluable for the future study of the land law in western Canada.

The people of the Canadian West, perhaps more than those of eastern or central Canada, comprise communities and companies who identify themselves closely to the land. Once the questions surrounding the ownership of rights to, and interests in, the land have been resolved, then perhaps we can fulfill Lambrecht's plea to study the enforcement of those land laws and policies out of which many of the controversies in the history of the West have arisen. **Louis A. Knafla**, *Department of History, University of Calgary*.