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## **Review of *Eye on the Future: Business People in Calgary and the Bow Valley, 1870- 1900* By Henry C. Klassen**

Vernon Jones  
*University of Calgary*

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**Eye on the Future: Business People in Calgary and the Bow Valley, 1870-1900.** By Henry C. Klassen. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2002. xxxviii + 458 pp. Photographs, maps, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 paper.

The city of Calgary is well known for its entrepreneurial spirit, often associated with the Calgary Stampede and Alberta's wildcatting oil and gas industry. For those interested in the early history of the city and the Bow Valley, Henry Klassen's *Eye on the Future* is both readable and enlightening. Concentrating on the years 1870 through 1900, Klassen captures Calgary's frontier blend of rural and emerging urban life well before the era of oil and gas.

Calgary's dynamic growth during this period was due to its geography. At the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers, the Edmonton Trail from the north converged with the Macleod Trail running south, and in turn the Whoop-Up Trail from Montana, bringing traders and ranchers from the Great Plains in the 1870s. Intersecting the system of north-south trails and wagon roads, the east-west Canadian Pacific Railway arrived in 1883, and the town of Calgary was incorporated in 1884. The CPR brought homesteaders, merchants, and entrepreneurs, linking Calgary by rail and steamships to Canada, the United Kingdom, and Hong Kong.

Klassen is at his best with the stories of individual pioneers. Isaac Baker was a merchant of the American Great Plains in the post-Civil War era. His company, I. G. Baker and Co., expanded from Fort Benton, Montana, into the Canadian prairies at Fort Macleod and then Calgary, creating a new hub for the wagon road economy. He supplied the Northwest Mounted Police and drove cattle from Fort Benton. Richard Hardisty, Chief Factor at Fort Edmonton for the Hudson's Bay Company, became general manager for the Calgary store. His niece Isabella Hardisty would marry CPR solicitor and land developer James Lougheed in 1884 and found an Alberta dynasty. Klassen recounts many personal histories of Calgary pioneers. Two enterprising women, Jessie Lafferty and Elizabeth Moore, open a private bank. Hutchings and Riley manufacture harnesses and saddles, later winning a Gold Medal at the World's Fair in Chicago. Arriving in Vancouver from Canton in 1899, Luey Dofoo finds his way to Calgary and opens the Sunlight restaurant, which becomes a local institution.

Klassen emphasizes entrepreneurial capitalism as the driving force for the emergence of business enterprise in Calgary and the Bow Valley, citing Schumpeter's forces of "creative destruction" to explain the rapid development in the last decades of the nineteenth century. More convincing, however, are the stories of the Montana traders, the arrival of the railway, and the entrepreneurs, ranchers, farmers, families, and businesses that flourished for a time and gave Calgary its unique and enduring character. **Vernon Jones**, *Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary*.