

some impression of the interviewee and the life he now lives. The community recollected was distinctive in two respects: it was the centre of the salmon canning industry on the Fraser River, and it was the largest Japanese-Canadian settlement in British Columbia outside Vancouver. Thus the Steveston recollected is the west coast Japanese-Canadian fishing community. Through the memories of those interviewed we catch glimpses of their lives as immigrants, fishermen, bachelors, husbands and wives, neighbours, trade unionists, objects of racialism, evacuees, and so on.

The problems raised by this book are basically those of its genre, for oral history of this sort is based upon assumptions which most historians cannot accept. Every man has a history—there is no doubt of that—but not every man is an historian. Judged as “an attempt to understand the role of the Japanese-Canadians in this community,” *Steveston Recollected* is a failure. If this book is any indication, few men have a clear sense of the larger patterns to which their lives conform. On the contrary, those whose memories are recorded here had only a partial, subjective sense of their own community. The reader who must rely upon these brief recollections is left with what is at best a highly impressionistic sense of this Japanese-Canadian community. The fundamental error in all this lies, not in the use of oral history, but rather its abuse. “Aural history expands the limits of historical documentation”, the Introduction explains, but with the zeal of the newly converted, oral historians have not so much augmented traditional documentation as they have abandoned it. *Steveston Recollected* is no exception. No trips to collections of documents for these historians; their only archive is the human mind.

If oral history offers us only a truncated past, of what value is it? Leaving aside its attractive freshness and intimacy, it provides a reservoir of fact—as long as due regard is paid to the frailties of the human memory. More important than that, it provides us with revealing glimpses of present states of mind. The true worth of *Steveston Recollected* lies not in its account of the town's early history but rather in what it reveals about how Japanese Canadians presently view their past. In that sense, particularly, ethnic historians may some day find the book of value.

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**The Protection of Cultural Property: Handbook of National Legislations.** Compiled by BONNIE BURNHAM. Paris: International Council of Museums, 1974. Pp. 206.

Because this book lacks an index the reader has to plod through 185 pages before coming to a definition of “cultural property” tucked in the text of a

convention adopted by UNESCO in 1970. The definition includes artefacts, museum objects, fine art, rare books, archives and manuscripts, and elements from or of historic sites. It is regretted that the components of this definition were not more clearly set out in the abstracts of national acts and instruments which form the bulk and purpose of this book. The compiler was concerned with those laws relating to "the problem of illicit destruction of cultural heritage" (not defined) and also controlling "the sale, excavation and export of cultural property". What kind of a questionnaire was issued to member countries, for their replies would seem to indicate wildly dissimilar interpretations of ICOM's intentions. Most of the legislation cited relates to historic sites, archaeological sites, their products and museum conservation. The Canadian legislation respecting the preservation of archives is broadly conspicuous by its absence; what then may be missing from all the other countries' entries?

On pages 159 to 173 will be found addresses of "organizations which are responsible from the protection of cultural heritage, either on an administrative or technical level, or in order to prevent violation of cultural property laws". The absence of any mention of major archives or archivists' associations would seem to indicate that you and I are not yet in that field!

One should recognise the enormous task faced by the compiler in translating and collating the multilingual data sent in to her but this does not excuse the fact that the book is uneven and is not comprehensive. One feels that the ultimate purpose of the publication somehow slipped away: one cannot share the hope expressed by the Director of ICOM in the preface that the book will become "an indispensable tool for those who play a role in the international circulation of cultural property, whether involved in field research, museum acquisition, private collection, or commerce in art and antiquities". Regretfully one puts the book away and, like little Peterkin on another occasion, one murmurs "But what good came of it at last?"

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**Camera in the Interior, 1858: H.L. Hime, Photographer; The Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition.** RICHARD J. HUYDA. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1975. Pp. 55 and 49 pp. of plates \$14.50

Archivists working with photograph collections are certainly well aware of the growing use of historic photographs in everything from scholarly studies to glossy coffee table books to distillery advertisements; but the photographers who created these images are virtually forgotten. A welcome exception is Humphrey Lloyd Hime, the subject of a recently published book by Richard J. Huyda.