

in Maritime economic and political power at the national level as the Canadian West and industrial Ontario developed, the long, painful era after 1918 of de-industrialization, social dislocation, and regional impoverishment are made relevant to the central motif: the struggle to provide sound economical instruction to the regional Methodist community and the rural Maritime population. Of course, the impact of new intellectual currents which challenged traditional elements in Maritime Wesleyan Methodism, whether they be higher Biblical criticism or post-Darwinian science, the Methodists' Social Gospel or United Church theology, Canadian nationalism or Maritime regionalism, are also part of the story.

If there are shortcomings in Reid's account they are largely those of the genre and the sources. Mount Allison's social constituency throughout the decades is sketched too thinly to satisfy. Similarly, the rise and fall of enrolments in the academies, the university, and particular programmes are assessed less frequently and with less confidence or success than are many other dimensions of Mount Allison's development. Accordingly, the impact of external regional factors is more asserted than proven. All the same, given the near-total absence of student records, Reid has been extraordinarily resourceful with the limited material he has located on the students' backgrounds and careers. Both specialists and general readers will find Reid's *Mount Allison* enjoyable and highly instructive. It is arguably the best Canadian university biography to date.

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William Stewart Herron: Father of the Petroleum Industry in Alberta. DAVID H. BREEN, ed. Edmonton: Historical Society of Alberta, 1984. 359 p. ISBN 0-88864-959-2 \$19.95.

During the energy crisis of the 1970s, the oil industry forced its way into the national consciousness as a contentious economic miracle identified almost exclusively with Alberta. It was therefore only a matter of time before the subject emerged as a major element in the historical scholarship of that province. Recent years have witnessed a profusion of theses, articles, monographs, and historical conferences devoted to various issues involving Alberta's oil wells, from their precarious turn-of-the-century beginnings, through the epoch-inaugurating strikes at Turner Valley (1914) and Leduc (1947), to the world famous mega-projects of the Athabasca tar sands.

A compendium of source documents for the career of William Stewart Herron should be of particular interest, especially to the historians of the Turner Valley period. David Breen, who has contributed much to the recent scholarship on the oil industry, has selected a wealth of pertinent material from several collections held in the Public Archives of Canada, the Provincial Archives of Alberta, and the Glenbow-Alberta Archives. These concern the exploration and development of the oil fields between 1911 and 1930 as reflected in the career of one of their most ardent, if not most successful, exploiters. It is the fifth in a series of primary source collections published by the Historical Society of Alberta.

Of course, compendia of historical documents are seldom intended for a general readership, and it is unlikely that Breen's assemblage will draw much cover-to-cover perusal,

particularly when it begins with an “articles of agreement,” continues with an “indenture,” and follows with an “option to purchase.” Not too exciting stuff, but creating a sensation was not its purpose. Taken in its entirety, the collection presents an all-inclusive overview of the grass-roots development of Alberta’s oil wells. It includes correspondence, news articles, agreements, options, leases, maps, charts, but not photographs, all of which reveal the high risk economic straits of the early wildcatters. As Breen points out, “few people today realise that the oil industry of western Canada, now dominated by giant, multi-national corporations, began as the work of many small, independent entrepreneurs.”

The compendium does much to substantiate Breen’s depiction of Herron as the father of the oil industry in Alberta. Herron was a typical migrant fortune-seeker of this period in the West, anxious to get rich quick, willing to toil, and also to gamble. In 1911 he noticed a number of gas seepages near Sheep Creek, several miles from Turner Valley. With self-made equipment, he was able to verify that this was indeed petroleum. He thereupon set out to acquire properties and mineral rights surrounding this discovery from the federal government and the CPR. As he was not a wealthy man, his next task was the search for development capital. This quest, over the next couple of years, brought a host of other Western businessmen into the picture, including James A. Lougheed and R.B. Bennett. The upshot was the Turner Valley strike of 1914, the arrival of the big oil companies, and Alberta’s first flirtation with a brief economic boom generated by oil. The proximity of Calgary made it the headquarters for oil companies in Canada.

Archivists will delight in the sensitivity which Breen, an historian, has shown to the principle of provenance. In his introduction, he maintains, “there is ... an inherent evidentiary value to such a collection in its original, undisturbed state which transcends the content of individual items. For this reason, rather than reorganize the collections into a single body, arranged and presented in a strict, chronological sequence, the author [sic] has kept the documents mainly in the grouping and sequence of their original filing systems.” The point of course is gospel for the physical arrangement of archival collections and provides much ease in reproduction by the editor. But is it useful when attempting to reveal the various nuances of a particular historical theme? Perhaps, in this case, subject arrangement might have been in order. A good cross-reference index might have done much towards assisting the readers in their specific subject research of the book, but, unfortunately, the index is less than three pages long.

All in all, however, Breen’s effort was very worthwhile. Our understanding of the development of the oil industry in Western Canada is greatly enhanced because of it.

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David Boyle: From Artisan to Archaeologist. GERALD KILLAN. Foreword by William C. Noble. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, in association with the Ontario Heritage Foundation, 1983. xvii, 276 p. ISBN 0-8020-2475-0 (bound); 0-8020-6496-5 (pbk.). \$35.00h/\$14.95 pa.

Few works on the history of the social sciences in Canada have given as much satisfaction as Gerald Killan’s *David Boyle*, partly because there have been few such works of any quality whatever, but (more flattering to the author) because the present book is a model