

actual title of the map, and no quotation marks are used); the caption on the book's dust-jacket, which reproduces the same cartouche, encloses "Map of Northern North America" in quotation marks, as though a real title were being quoted. The book's editors should have been able to correct these inconsistencies, and the advice of a cartobibliographer would doubtless have been useful. (*Archival Citations*, published by the National Archives of Canada, also provides useful guidelines.)

I have long considered an earlier work of Ruggles' titled *Manitoba Historical Atlas*, co-authored with John Warkentin, as one of the outstanding historical atlases of a Canadian province or region. I predict that *A Country So Interesting* will soon be widely seen to occupy a similar status.

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**The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age.** ARTHUR J. RAY. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990. xviii, 283 p. ISBN 0-8020-6743-3 \$18.95 (pa.)

Arthur Ray has produced another in his fine series of studies on the history of the fur trade in Canada, focussed upon the central operations of the Hudson's Bay Company. In this volume he ventures into an era unfamiliar to most readers, examining the years from 1870 when the company surrendered its exclusive trading rights to the new government of Canada through to the end of the Second World War. During that period the relative isolation of the native peoples who did the trapping was steadily undermined by the coming of steamboats, railways, outboard engines, and airplanes, while fur marketing was transformed by the telegraph and the telephone. As a result the HBC faced greater competition for furs and for native custom, and a cash economy gradually took the place of the longstanding credit system. The central theme of Ray's book concerns the ways in which the company struggled to adapt itself to this much-altered milieu.

As in Ray's previous work he has relied primarily upon the huge mass of HBC records deposited at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, which, he notes, contain 4,900 linear feet of material for the post-1870 period that are gradually being opened under a thirty-year rule. Precisely how much of this mountain range of documents the author was able to examine is unclear, but his bibliography contains five single-spaced pages of record group titles from this collection alone. Evidently there is still much for researchers to do with this archive, but Ray is to be saluted for leading the first expedition into previously uncharted territory.

If there is a disappointment it is that Ray does not have more to tell us about the HBC's rivals, though he points out that such information is hard to come by. And there is little reliance on material which sets forth the story from the native point of view rather than the company's. Is there, perhaps, a wealth of evidence in the records of the Department of Indian Affairs in Ottawa which might fill out that side of the story?

The major focus of the book, then, is upon the ways in which the HBC tried to adapt to changing business conditions. Thus it forms part of the recent literature on efforts by managers to alter corporate organization to meet new challenges since the late

nineteenth century, a theme central to the work of Alfred D. Chandler of the Harvard Business School. Though Ray does cite Chandler's *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (1977) he does not spend much time examining the British management of the company in detail. That is a pity for it might enable readers to fit the HBC into the picture of big business in the United Kingdom presented in Chandler's latest work, *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism* (1990). There Chandler argues that, unlike the Americans or Germans, British businessmen practised "personal capitalism" (often centred on a family fortune) and did not create extensive managerial hierarchies.

Ray does focus effectively upon internal conflicts within the company. Some HBC men quipped, "When is a business not a business? When it is a fur trade" (p. 170). That view reflected the old imperial-colonial attitude that the company formed an important element in the structure of British power overseas. The clearest expression of this was the decision by the governor and committee to prohibit traders from buying any furs in Canada in 1914-15 owing to the outbreak of war. Despite surging demand for furs in the United States, they refused to allow sales there because their "only major concern involved preserving London's future as the world entrepot for furs" (p. 99). And management in Britain clung to such views long after their economic irrelevance had become plain, a dissonance nicely captured in one 1939 photograph from the book (after p. 176), in which the governor and his two highest underlings stand on a dock at a northern lake beside the company's first airplane (which had just been acquired) in their bespoken suits, clutching their fedoras.

As early as 1911 the HBC had created a Canadian committee to advise on business matters, and during the interwar years this body made several unsuccessful attempts to persuade London to undertake an internal reorganization. In 1931 this body took over operational control of the trade but the friction never disappeared. In part this reflected the conviction of many longtime traders that centralized bureaucratic management was not appropriate.

Ray fully describes the increasing competition to which the HBC was subjected by firms like Revillon Frères, Lamson and Hubbard, and the Northern Trading Company, which eventually were taken over by the HBC. What the company could not control was European trappers, mail-order fur sales and the demand for cash in exchange for furs, all of which undermined the ties that had so long bound natives to it. The changing composition of the fur harvest is also detailed, including such marketing devices as merchandising muskrat pelts as "Hudson Bay seal." But there is little description of the retailing and commercial activities of the HBC in southern Canada in the interwar years to which the Canadian committee devoted so much attention.

*The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age*, then, is a valuable piece of company history, which adds much to knowledge of the HBC's activities in the twentieth century. As an analytical work of business history, however, it is somewhat less successful. Readers might also wish for more attention to be paid to the native peoples, as was the case in Ray's earlier book, *Indians in the Fur Trade*. Yet the author is to be commended for tackling the huge mass of twentieth-century HBC records and providing us with a valuable outline of the company's fur trading operations up to the Second World War.

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