

snapshot quality of plate 27, "Bathers at the Cave and Basin, Banff," as well as many others, belies Whyte's assertion that the photographs "are rich in style."

This noble attempt to portray Byron Harmon as a photographer who is relevant beyond his time has failed because the photographs selected do not reflect the praise lavished upon them. *Great Days in the Rockies* will appeal to mountaineers and naturalists; it will also deserve comparison from a photographic viewpoint with the images of other mountain photographers. It will surely provide much material for debate on the aesthetic quality of photographs intended for commercial sale.

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Krieghoff. J. RUSSELL HARPER. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, © 1979. xvi, 204 p. ISBN 0 8020 2348 7 \$29.95.

There are in Canada two types of art books. The most well known are the showy Christmas massives, characterized by glossy plates which overwhelm a text based upon parasitic research and are not meant to be read. A second type, characterized by a concern with research and by illustrations which exist to complement a text, is as far from the first as Homer is from Harlequin. These books, using archival and other sources, make a significant contribution to knowledge as well as superficial appreciation. The footnoted sources are the test of quality: if solid archival research is present, it is scholarship; if not, it is Christmas puffery. Leading examples of the second type are Mellon's *Group of Seven*, Reid's *Group of Seven*, Hill's *Canadian Painting in the Thirties*, and Tippet's *Emily Carr*. J. Russell Harper stands as a doyen of this genre—a researcher of assiduity, a writer of erudition, a scholar of judgement.

Cornelius Krieghoff is an elusive subject. We have a great many more documents from his brush than from his pen. With "all too many tantalizing gaps" in the written sources, "the paintings themselves must thus be the foundation for a book about him." In short, the written material does not reach monographic proportions and the biographical account must be fleshed out with intelligent probabilities, reasonable must-haves, and anecdotal accounts from contemporary literary sources. Where the pictures can inform about Krieghoff as painter and person, Harper extracts the information with practiced skill. He then uses them as social and cultural documents, coupling them to contemporary accounts and popular vignettes. This double evidence (written and visual) and double use (life and times) does not always result in perfect marriages.

Harper's Preface is a valuable and revealing essay on the problems of Krieghoff scholarship as well as on the author's method of dealing with it. He is clearly concerned with using all available written sources and, especially for the early years, he has uncovered some valuable new ones. But so much of the evidence about Krieghoff is hearsay, so little documentable, and Harper is too scrupulous to allow the two to be confused. He tells us what is verifiable, what is unverifiable yet possible, and what is undocumented and improbable.

The book is largely written as a biographical account, reinforced with social and historical examination of the paintings and their subjects. Harper has diligently traced Krieghoff's early life in Holland and Germany by on-site research. He follows the artist to the United States, to Toronto, Montreal and Quebec, finally to Chicago. His illustrations are rich, well-selected, and aptly used. They come from a tireless search for Krieghoffs that raised the number of known works by about fifty percent and bring us closer to Harper's goal of a *catalogue raisonné*. A chapter on "Misattributions, Deceptions, and Forgeries" is particularly engaging—and the only such piece dealing with this problem in Canadian

art. A "Summary" of Krieghoff's work is most unusual—it is a *précis* "designed to demonstrate the range of [Krieghoff's] subject matter and the frequency of use of various themes."

Harper makes no real assessment of Krieghoff as an artist. There are single phases, such as "spontaneous freshness" but Harper is perhaps too cautious in not judging the overall quality of Krieghoff. He is quite willing to judge the paintings as "significant historical documents," but other judgements have a curious hesitancy and a measure of faint praise: Krieghoff's canvasses "are entertaining and cleverly executed works"; "it is a measure of his artistic prowess that he has been so frequently imitated"; his works "have an intimacy, verve, and sense of quality that grips the attention as do no others by his generation of Canadian artists"; he is "the first 'popular' artist" in Canada; his work is "beyond any suggestion of dull mediocrity." One does wish that Harper had come out frankly with an assessment of Krieghoff and, more importantly, a statement of the standards upon which such an assessment ought to be made.

Harper is not, of course, the first author to deal with Krieghoff. There have been monographs by C.M. Barbeau, by Hughes de Jouvancourt and, by far the most valuable, by Raymond Vézina. Harper has gone beyond them to produce a warm, scholarly and almost satisfying book. Because of the frustrating lack of documentary material on its subject, *Krieghoff* may not be Harper's best book, but it certainly matches his best effort—a not inconsequential tribute.

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Cordial But Not Cosy: A History of the Office of the Auditor General. SONJA SINCLAIR. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979. 208 p. ill. ISBN 0 7710 8157 X \$19.95.

In *Cordial But Not Cosy*, Sonja Sinclair, Director of Communications with Price Waterhouse Canada, recounts the history of the Office of the Auditor General, from the appointment in 1878 of Canada's first independent Auditor General to the 1978 implementation of a new Auditor General Act, the creation of the Office of the Comptroller General and the introduction of value-for-money auditing. The Office of the Auditor General has been and continues to be an important federal institution; unfortunately, the author has not done it justice in this brief volume.

Her book is divided into two very uneven parts. Part I examines the first ninety-five years of the Audit Office from the appointment of John Lorn McDougall (1878) to that of the present Auditor General James J. Macdonnell (1973). In the second part, which constitutes fully one half the book, events and developments since 1973 are examined in greater detail. McDougall's role in establishing the independence of the Auditor General's Office is adequately outlined. Examples of his numerous confrontations with politicians and public servants are told in a manner that illustrates the aggressive, no nonsense tenor of his 27 years in office. However, McDougall's immediate successors, John Fraser (1905-1919), Edward Sutherland (1919-1923) and Georges Gonthier (1924-1939) are quickly dismissed in a few pages. Watson Sellar, who held the position of Auditor General from 1940 to 1959, is studied more closely and rightfully so. In his two decades as Auditor General, Sellar strengthened the power of the Audit Office, improved its image amongst politicians and federal departments, and subsequently, the effectiveness of the Office was vastly enhanced. A.M. Henderson succeeded Sellar from 1960 to 1973 (two chapters), a period marked with increased public awareness of financial mismanagement in the public service highlighted annually in the Auditor General's report to Parliament. The remainder of the book, six chapters, are devoted to J.J. Macdonnell. They include a discussion of his