

happened to be involved? That these questions can be posed, however, in no way lessens our appreciation of *A Peculiar Kind of Politics* — a remarkably good book.

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Clifford Sifton: Volume 1, The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900. D.J. HALL. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1981. xii, 361 p. ISBN 0 7748 0135 2 \$27.50.

The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957. J.L. Granatstein. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982. xiv, 333 p. ISBN 19 540387 8 \$14.95 pa.

Students of Canadian history will welcome David Hall's professional and independent biography of Clifford Sifton. For too long J.W. Dafoe's *The Life and Times of Clifford Sifton* remained the only full effort to record, albeit from treacherously close quarters, Sifton's career. In this respect Hall's work is a major addition to the inventory of biographies of major Canadian historical figures.

It is to be underlined that Hall's book is a political biography and that it bears the major characteristics of the genre. Sifton is viewed as a Manitoba politician who elevated himself into a position of considerable political power in Ottawa in part by calling attention to the unfulfilled promises of the National Policy. If Sifton was adept as a provincial spokesman at blaming the federal Conservatives for failing to devise an equitable tariff and railway policy, he was equally determined to overlook those failures as a federal cabinet minister. Although as a Manitoba provincial politician Sifton had very decided views on the necessity of a national school system, one senses that he later wished that the purists from the Roman Catholic and, even more so, the national school camp would cease interfering with his efforts to govern, and especially abandon the use of his own rhetoric against him. The harping of the critics only obstructed his use of political power for the development of the Canadian west. Hall summarizes it aptly: "For Sifton ... the political game was a means to an end. Political power was essential to the implementation of the policies of development that he considered vital to Canada."

Hall sheds light on the alliances and dissembling to which Sifton resorted in order to hold onto power. It is noteworthy that the author provides the first clear explanation of Sifton's relationship to the *Manitoba Free Press*. Perhaps clarity is a misleading term here since knowledge of Sifton's ownership of the newspaper was carefully kept from contemporaries and seemed to provide Sifton with the skills needed to construct his later corporate labyrinths. On the other side of the ledger, it is a shortcoming of the book that fuller attention is not given to Sifton's use of political power to amass substantial economic power. Hall cannot be completely faulted for this since his major source, the Sifton Papers in the Public Archives of Canada, is primarily a collection of political papers and offers only fascinating and tantalizing glimpses of Sifton's business links.

If the absence of documentation is largely responsible for this shortcoming, it is difficult to be as generous towards Hall's brief treatment of the policies of the Department of the Interior. Certainly these policies are summarized, however one

would wish a more detailed explanation and analysis of them. The footnotes to the book indicate that little use was made of the Department's records; however, it must be recalled that this book was written as a political biography and that it would be unfair to reprove Hall for not producing a different work.

If Hall's book can be described as a conventional political biography, J.L. Granatstein's *The Ottawa Men* must be viewed differently because it judiciously combines the biographical approach with an analysis of policy. Along with a balanced use of secondary sources, private papers, government records, and interviews, the author achieves a smooth transition in the analysis of the Ottawa men from O.D. Skelton to R.B. Bryce. It is to be hoped that at least some of the individuals examined in the book may eventually receive from Granatstein the full-length biographical treatment he gave Norman Robertson in an earlier work.

It is with consummate skill that the author takes the reader from the beginnings of the contemporary professional civil service under O.D. Skelton through a lengthy explanation of the recruiting system he devised and then to the personnel he brought to Ottawa. With the exceptions that Granatstein carefully points out, the mandarins came from diverse backgrounds yet blended together to form a remarkably talented and cohesive group. Their abilities as generalists gave balance and clarity to government policies in numerous areas. The most striking example of their cohesion is in Granatstein's analysis of the "road to functionalism" in both foreign affairs and international monetary policy.

If there is one theme pervading the book, it is that the mandarins strengthened the power of the federal government through its dominant position in the national economy and fortified Canada's international position through the country's contribution to the war effort. The mandarins had the appropriate policies to respond creatively to the charges wrought by the war. They had learned well the lessons of the Depression and the aftermath of the First World War. These lessons led to policies which rendered political advantages, but which were remarkably independent of politicians. The most political of the mandarins, J.W. Pickersgill, seemed to be the weakest and the least imaginative in using power to devise policies. It is a comment on the abilities of the mandarins that they and the country benefitted from their freedom from day-to-day political interference. Granatstein appears to be most at ease in discussing the policies and mandarins who were most active during the Depression and the war. It may be fair to conclude that he is weaker in discussing the policies of the post-war period in large part because of the strikingly forward and pioneering nature of policies in the previous periods. In dealing with the postwar period, the book becomes more biographical, possibly because there is a stronger documentary base in autobiographies. Arnold Heeney, J.W. Pickersgill, Lester Pearson, Dana Wilgress, and in a more monographic vein Escott Reid have written their autobiographies. The advantages provided by this comparative wealth may have altered the tempo and balance of the book.

Of chief interest to archivists are the implications these two books have for documenting Canadian history. Whereas policy and politics were inseparable in Sifton's time, there is later a separation of the two which manifests itself particularly during the 1940s. If Sifton had a firm grip on his department, one cannot identify any minister who enjoyed as much authority in the 1940s and afterwards, save perhaps C.D. Howe. For the archivist, the documenting of federal government activity for Sifton's time has been accomplished principally by acquiring the

politicians' papers and the official records of the departments. The influence on policy of high-level civil servants like Sifton's Deputy Minister of the Interior, James Smart, was slight precisely because they were recruited as supporters of the minister, not as policy creators. This is not to suggest that the personal papers of men like Smart would not be valuable, but simply that they would document policies which had been formed primarily by the minister.

In the later period Granatstein studies, the mandarins became too powerful to omit from any account of political history. James Smart need not be discussed at length in writing about Sifton, but no satisfactory political biography of a key minister in the King or St. Laurent Governments could be undertaken without giving the mandarins their due. For archivists at the Public Archives, this development underlines the need to maintain active acquisition programmes in the area of the public service. Because the recent multiplication of federal government activities has dispersed the power of Granatstein's mandarins among many public servants and advisory and regulatory agencies, the archivist must now be able to identify and appraise a range of records lying far beyond the familiar papers of the cabinet ministers. Of course archivists responsible for the records of provincial and municipal governments face similar challenges.

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A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late-Nineteenth Century Canada.
PAUL RUTHERFORD, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982. xi, 292 p.
ISBN 0 8020 64 59 0 \$12.50 pa.

Long an essential source of information for historians, the daily newspaper has been largely ignored as an object of extended critical examination. Paul Rutherford's *A Victorian Authority* does much to correct this conspicuous deficiency in Canadian historiography. Taking his cue from theorists of mass communications (notably Harold Lasswell and Jay Jensen), he discusses the work of reporters, editors, publishers, the impact of publishing technology, the nature of the newspaper reading public, the kinds of information presented, and the ideological perspective newspapers conveyed.

The study begins with a description of the factors which made possible the growth and development of the press. Industrialization, urbanization, and rising literacy rates were the prerequisites for the urban daily press and the forces which shaped its character. Out of this process of modernization a Canadian middle class emerged, and from that class came many newspaper owners, editors, and reporters. In fact, the press, the author writes, "was at best, only a mechanism of bourgeois liberty." Journalists were driven by values shared with the bourgeois segment of Canadian society. They exhibited the behaviour of the nineteenth-century entrepreneur and sought the rising status businessmen enjoyed. Indeed, Rutherford reminds us that a newspaper was very much a business enterprise requiring close attention to income and expenses, and to prosaic matters such as paper supply, type, newsgathering services, personnel, payroll and advertising volume and rates.

There is a paradox in this story too. The daily newspaper, by its very nature,