

create a somewhat romantic image of herself as author and to preserve some degree of distance even among her close friends.

Realities were always faced by Montgomery, but she softened them whenever possible with her love of nature and her sense of humour. Literary tours provide amusing moments such as her conversation with the wife of a history teacher whose student included Anne of Green Gables in between Katherine of Aragon and Jane Seymour in a list of Henry VIII's wives. A luncheon with Emmeline Pankhurst elicits the following comment: "She had a sweet, tired gentle face—looked more like a Presbyterian elder's wife who had nothing more strenuous in her life than running the local Ladies Aid and putting up with the elder."

Montgomery's capacity for joy was most fully realized through her deep sensitivity to nature, which is frequently described in terms of fantasy and mysticism. A group of spruce trees at sunset are ". . . like dark, slender witchmaidens weaving their spells of magic in a rune of elder days" and walking in the woods, she identifies herself as ". . . the priestess of an oracle under her sacred pines." Although she finds the beauty of the Muskoka breathtaking, her visits home to her Island provide a spiritual reunion with her old haunts. Such heightened perceptions produced an interest in psychic experimentation, and Montgomery writes several interesting accounts of attempts to communicate with a dead friend, and prophetic dreams about the outcome of battles during the First World War.

As the years of their correspondence progressed, Montgomery's letters to MacMillan took the form of yearly epistles, frequently running to more than twenty pages. Since much of their material was culled from her journals, there are some repetitions of the

previously published letters to her other literary correspondent, Ephraim Weber. But there remain more than sufficient examples of new insights to make the present collection an important addition to the slowly increasing body of works about the author. Montgomery once wrote to MacMillan: "In a few generations letters will be obsolete. Everyone will *talk* to absent friends the world over by *radio*. It will be nice, but something will be lost with letters." Her prediction is turning out to be accurate, but fortunately not in time to prevent an increased acquaintance with the writer through the pages of her own correspondence.

Susannah Joyce-Jones
London, Ontario

In Her Own Right: Selected Essays on Women's History in British Columbia. Barbara Latham and Cathy Kess, Eds. *Camosum College: Victoria, B.C., 1980. Pp. 302.*

In Her Own Right is an ambitious attempt by a group of lay historians to write a women's history of British Columbia. According to the editors, their purpose was not intentionally "to advance the theoretical explanations of women's historiography in Canada," but to offer a regional perspective on various activities B.C. women have been engaged in historically. This means looking at topics such as immigration, politics, reform, prostitution, and (with reference to native women) hunting. Over half of the seventeen articles in this volume focus on institutions. Thus, B.C. women are considered within the milieu of orphanages, Women's Institutes, suffrage and moral reform organizations, University Clubs, trade unions and social welfare services.

Already in its second printing, this collection has some distinct merits and is a welcome addition to the literature of women's history in Canada. However, it also suffers some serious shortcomings, even within the restricted framework adopted by its editors.

Envisioned as early as the twenties, the work came to fruition in the late 1970's as part of a student summer employment project. It is based on papers, theses (non-doctoral) and essays especially prepared for the volume. To its credit, Camosun College was instrumental in making publication possible. Judging from the "Contributors" list, most are outside the field of history. One finds undergraduate and graduate students, non-students, persons studying education, political science, library science, and women's studies, a Chief Financial Officer of a Texas oil and gas corporation, an Executive Director of the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation, and a local archivist. None are professional historians. Herein lies an inherent weakness.

But, to begin with the book's merits. Enthusiasm for the subject matter is evident throughout. Moreover, the time period over which the essays span is considerable. Chronologically, the volume begins in the mid-19th century during the B.C. gold rush. Jackie Lay's "To Columbia on the Tynemouth: The Emigration of Single Women and Girls in 1862" provides some interesting insights into the importation of potential wives for single miners and others. Another essay, "Helena Gutteridge: Votes for Women and Trade Unions" by Susan Wade chronicles the life of a B.C. suffragist and trade unionist who was active on women's issues until her death in 1960. Over a century of B.C. history is thus covered. And as mentioned, thematically the volume slices through many different aspects of B.C. history.

Each essay has a bibliographic section, often not as complete or comprehensive as one would like, but which embodies primary and secondary material as well as the occasional mention of other historical resources like tapes and photographs. Illustrations in the book are well-chosen and add to the impact of the essays. At the end of the book, there is an appendix by Linda Louise Hale, "Votes for Women: Profiles of Prominent British Columbia Suffragists and Social Reformers" which, while not entirely systematic, is a handy compilation. The use of photographs in this appendix certainly helps bring these women a little closer to life.

This volume further contains some longer essays on significant but forgotten women such as Helena Gutteridge. Roberta Pazdro's "Agnes Deans Cameron: Against the Current" tells us about a lively B.C. "equal rights feminist" who at the time of her funeral in 1912 was called "the most remarkable woman citizen of the province." (p. 101) There is a study of a staunch religious maternal feminist by Gloria Whelen in "Maria Grant, 1854-1937: The Life and Times of an Early Twentieth Century Christian." Another biography is Tami Adilman's "Evlyn Farris and the University Women's Club." This woman, born in Nova Scotia and the daughter of a professor and clergyman at Acadia University, subsequently became a prominent Liberal and 'organizational woman' in British Columbia at the turn of the century. These studies are helpful in expanding our sparse knowledge of women's history.

Using statistical techniques, Michael H. Cramer suggests in "Public and Political: Documents of the Woman's Suffrage Campaign in British Columbia, 1871-1917: The View from Victoria" that there was "little correlation between the successes of the Liberal

party and the suffrage referendum despite the fact that both won decisive victories in the province." (p. 94) This finding raises some interesting questions on the suffrage movement and politics that might well be followed up in analyzing other provincial elections where the suffrage issue dominated. Deborah Nilsen, too, offers some excellent data using graphs, tables and maps to supplement her arguments on Vancouver prostitution. The possible use of social science techniques to advance our understanding of women's history is made evident in both these studies. This can only be encouraged.

Less satisfactory is the overall quality of writing. The excessive, injudicious and frequently wholly unnecessary use of quotes should have been eliminated during the editorial process. The overall writing style tends to be choppy, and this reader would have welcomed a redrafting. Here is also where some serious consultation with professional historians would have helped immeasurably. For example, an essay on "Sexism in B.C. Trade Unions" shows little real knowledge of the working class history that has been written in Canada, let alone the problems of collective bargaining. Nor are present day unions with strong feminist leanings, for example, SOR-WUC mentioned. In another essay, the YWCA is called an organization for "welcoming friendless girls"; reference to a recent study ignored in this essay's bibliography, would have led to a different interpretation. Almost every essay reveals gaps in secondary literature of one kind or another, works not having been consulted nor an effort made to integrate outside findings. Thus, the failure to deal with literature on social reform in Canada in an essay on "Women and Reform in British Columbia" only raises doubts about the analysis conducted.

In addition, while some research based on

primary sources appears solid, some studies in this volume suffer from obvious thinness. For example, one simply cannot understand the response of Vancouver women to the depression by exclusively relying on either the *Minute Book* of the Local Council of Women of Vancouver or the *Yearbook* of the National Council of Women of Canada. This merely leads to much guesswork and superficial findings.

A lack of general background in Canadian history is evident too. Amor de Cosmos, who greeted emigrant single women in 1862, is described as the editor of the *Colonist* (p. 32), but no mention is made of him as future premier of the province, nor is any significance given to his presence on the arrival of the ship. In another essay the problem in the B.C. relief camps during the depression is noted and the sit-down strike of June 1938 is mentioned (p. 271), but not a single word is said on the more significant On-To-Ottawa Trek by B.C. relief camp workers and others which had taken place a few years before. The above are examples of not having done one's homework. This clearly detracts from the quality of writing and interpretation.

There is also little overall synthesis within each of these essays. Despite its claims, *In Her Own Right* is unsuccessful as regional history. True, women in one region of Canada are being studied here, but no real effort has been made to place these women within the context of B.C. history. How did they reflect a regional identity? This is never fully pursued by any of the authors. Similarly, these essays do not break new ground in the interpretation of Canadian women's history; they provide us with more information. An exception is perhaps a short work by Christine Wozney, "Post-script Huntresses," in which evidence is offered that B.C. native women participated as hunters in the late 19th century, a role traditionally associated with men. As a result, these

essays are really closer to local history than regional history. They have taken the advice of Gillian Marie in the introductory essay, "Writing Women into British Columbia's History," only in a limited way.

The above comments are not intended to discourage others lacking a strong background in history to embark on such projects as *In Her Own Right*. On balance this book is a flawed but credible contribution. Being reminded that Canadian women's history is only in its infancy, nonetheless one should also benefit from other's mistakes. To convincingly write a Canadian women's history which will endure, meticulous research, careful analysis, non-polemical interpretation and clear writing are a must.

R. Baehre
Mt. St. Vincent University

Divine Rebel: The Life of Anne Marbury Hutchinson. Selma R. Williams. *New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981. Pp. 246.*

Lifts of Power: The Writings of Rebecca Jackson, Black Visionary, Shaker Eldress. Edited with an introduction by Jean McMahon Humez. *Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981. Pp. 368.*

On the surface, these books have little in common. One is a popular biography of a well-known rebellious member of the seventeenth century Boston elite; the other, a scholarly edition of spiritual writings by a poor and little-known nineteenth-century black American. What these books share are female figures who were persecuted for their unorthodox behavior and authors who successfully bring a feminist

perspective to their respective subjects. To read these books together is to be impressed yet again by the visibility of women's struggle for equality over the centuries and the success with which patriarchal history has distorted or obscured this struggle.

Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) has suffered more from distortion than obscurity. Drawing upon the evidence of her chief adversary, misogynist John Winthrop, historians have judged Hutchinson's behavior variously as unfeminine or a menopausal aberration. No such interpretation, of course, is necessary. The doctrines of Familism, later dubbed anti-nomianism, as taught by Hutchinson, challenged the Puritan patriarchs of the Massachusetts Bay colony on many levels. It pitted the Doctrine of Grace against the Doctrine of Works, unbridled individualism against hierarchical authority, separation of church and state against quasi-theocracy and equality for women against the patriarchal family. It is little wonder that within four years of her arrival in Boston in 1634, Hutchinson was expelled from the colony and excommunicated from the church.

Author Selma Williams usefully devotes the first section of her book to an examination of conditions in England which influenced Hutchinson's world view. The cult of womanhood fashionable during the long reign of Elizabeth I, the brutal anti-feminist reaction under the Stuarts and the growing radicalism of Puritan theology gave women in seventeenth century Britain a challenging environment in which to define their role in society. Hutchinson's early socialization and exposure to Puritan doctrine, coupled with her exceptional mind and rare skills as a mid-wife, would make her a formidable person wherever she lived. Well before she left England, Hutchinson was accepted within the charmed circle of the Rever-