

often need to refer to a book of this nature to look up a name, date, or place. Libraries will certainly want both of them. A second edition of either book in paperback binding would be advantageous as a means of reducing the price and would allow correction of the errors found in each book.

*John Spletstoesser*  
P.O. Box 515  
Waconia, Minnesota, U.S.A.  
55387  
*spletts@usfamily.net*

AN APOSTLE OF THE NORTH: MEMOIRS OF THE RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM BOMPAS. By H.A. CODY. Introduction by WILLIAM R. MORRISON and KENNETH S. COATES. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 2002. ISBN 0-88864-400-0. lxxxv + 391 p., maps, b&w illus., bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$29.95.

*An Apostle of the North* is more than a biography. It tells the story of an era—the time when Canada was founded, the search was on for the Northwest Passage, and the race for the North Pole began in earnest, and the time of the Métis rebellion and the Klondike gold rush.

A reprint of the 1908 book by H.A. Cody, Rector of Christ Church, Whitehorse, *An Apostle of the North* is the story of William Carpenter Bompas, missionary to the Arctic. Bompas oversaw the carving of the huge diocese of Athabasca into two dioceses (Athabasca and Mackenzie River) in 1884 and then into three in 1891, when part of the Mackenzie River diocese became the Selkirk diocese (renamed Yukon in 1907). Bompas served terms as bishop of all three dioceses in succession. In their introduction to this new edition, Dr. W.R. Morrison (University of Northern British Columbia) and Dr. K. Coates (University of Saskatchewan) state their goal: to “stimulate a new consideration of the relationship between the churches and the indigenous people of Canada. Alongside the clear evidence of abuse there needs to be appreciation of the complexity that characterized the missionary enterprise, and this means appreciating the fact that there were partnerships and friendships as well as victimization and colonization” (p. xxxv). More than that, they state, the First Nations people found in Christianity something more compelling than cultural domination or paternalism.

William Bompas was a normal boy, reared in a Baptist setting, probably as confused as any teenager today. He studied for ordination in the Church of England. At 21, after hearing a powerful sermon indicating the need for a young missionary to replace the ailing Reverend Robert McDonald in the Canadian northwest, Bompas volunteered to go with the Church Missionary Society and was ordained in the Anglican Church. Three weeks later, on June 30, 1865, he was westward bound on a steamer. On Christmas day of that year, he arrived in Fort Simpson

ready to begin his work, only to find the Rev. McDonald fully recovered.

Mr. Bompas then began years of traversing the vast country with a clear purpose: to spread the word of God to the Natives he met. His work included establishing Indian schools in the communities he visited; he was a true apostle in the Biblical sense of the word. He was exposed to extreme heat and cold, floods, and horrendous encounters with mosquitoes and large animals. He went to cure the sick and afflicted and taught Biblical truths through story. He loved children. He loved “his people” and worked on their behalf with the Canadian Government, as well as sheltering them from the white invasion during the gold rush.

Cody’s work throws valuable light on the country and its inhabitants. Chapter three accurately summarizes the exploration by fur-trading companies of the Mackenzie and Yukon Rivers in the northwest. Chapter four is entitled “the Father’s Business,” but I would call it “Who is Teaching Whom?” In Bompas’s view, his mission was to “bring home precious souls”; to teach the Christian view in rituals of baptism, marriage, and death; to educate Natives in the Word; and to extend the Anglican sphere of influence over the Roman Catholic presence. Amidst these efforts, however, Bompas gained a vast repertoire of knowledge from the Natives. He learned to climb mountains; travel on rivers; speak, read, and write their language; practise the art of sledging; use snowshoes (which he calls, “northern slippers”); deal with the climate; camp in the woods; find fuel and make fires; give first aid; and navigate the country. In chapter five, Cody describes the three “classes” (Bompas’s term) of Natives identified by Bompas: Tenni, Tukudh, and Esquimaux. Cody explains the distinguishing characteristics of each class, dealing with temperament and attitudes; livelihood and craftsmanship; survival skills and hunting; relationships with outsiders; views of life and death; social living arrangements, diet, and housing; and weaknesses—anger, gambling, and alcohol.

Space does not allow a complete account of the work that Bompas, and later Mrs. Bompas, accomplished over a 40-year span. The book is full of anecdotes that show the warmth and integrity of the bishop and his wife. They loved their parish people in the vast territory assigned to their care and risked life and limb for those in need of rescue, shelter, home, or friendship. Bompas’s admiration for the Natives is evident in so many ways; his adaptation to their way of life is a testimony to that. He remained humble, with few possessions, and often appeared unkempt. With his patriarchal appearance, he became a somewhat legendary figure among the people of the North. His vision for these people was the pursuit of literacy and the teachings of the Gospel. Even the miners of the gold rush held him in deepest respect. Their lack of attentiveness to spiritual matters did not hinder their appreciation of his nobleness. (In 1873, Bompas had a premonition that the land would contain something more precious than iron. This came true when gold was discovered in 1896.)

Bompas served over 40 years in the North, returning only once to England during that time. He died on June 9, 1906, in the town he helped rename, Carcross, Yukon.

The introduction by Drs. Morrison and Coates views Bompas from a 21st century perspective, as an archaic, sometimes misguided man who did not fit in with Victorian society or proper church circles. But he did fit in with Yukon culture. His stubborn and somewhat eccentric nature, along with his missionary zeal and evangelical fervor, brought immediacy to addressing a series of long-standing injustices in the Yukon. Here was a man who quarreled with the government, the church, and local authorities, who amidst his work married for convenience. I became apprehensive about the story that I was about to read, since modern society disdains missions and considers the Christian faith synonymous with residential schools and the lawsuits that are bankrupting the church. This man was politically incorrect for today's world. Morrison and Coates admit that there was not a lot of material from which to write a new account of Bompas's life, and so they decided that a reprint of Cody's work was fully justified. Cody's text, in contrast to the introduction, is in the genre of historical writing that I expected, which is more appropriate to Bompas.

The illustrations, all black and white, are marvelous. Drawn from a number of sources, the photographs and drawings depict a very accurate portrait of the era. Portraits of Bishop and Mrs. Bompas, scenery of the northwest, camp and travel situations, Natives living their life, and the funeral of Bompas himself intersperse the story Cody weaves. The reproductions are of excellent quality.

This is a book that fits into the whole spirit of a northern library. Spirituality is an issue that is a part of every person's life. The vision of Bompas, the drive of a northern explorer, the zeal for survival in the gold rush, and the desire to express culture in one's homeland are natural extensions of everyone. I would recommend this book to all who seek further understanding of the relationship between humans and what we could call God's playground.

*Mike Hoyer*  
132 Parker Drive  
Prince George, British Columbia, Canada  
V2M 4S8

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- BIRD TRADITIONS OF THE LIME VILLAGE AREA DENA'INA: UPPER STONY RIVER ETHNO-ORNITHOLOGY.** By PRISCILLA N. RUSSELL and GEORGE C. WEST, with editorial and linguistic comments by JAMES KARI and illustrations by GEORGE C. WEST. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 2003. (Available from Alaska Native Knowledge Network, PO Box 756730, Fairbanks, AK 99775-6730, U.S.A.) ISBN 1-877962-38-4. xx + 206 p., map, b&w illus., appendices (incl. bib.). Softbound. US\$10.00.
- FLORA OF THE HUDSON BAY LOWLAND AND ITS POSTGLACIAL ORIGINS.** By JOHN L. RILEY. Ottawa: National Research Council of Canada, 2003. ISBN 0-660-18941-0. viii + 236 p., maps, colour illus., bib., appendices. Softbound. Cdn\$49.95.
- HISTORICAL ATLAS OF THE ARCTIC.** By DEREK HAYES. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2003. ISBN 1-55365-004-2. 208 p., b&w and colour illus. and maps, map catalogue, index. Hardbound. Cdn\$75.00.
- HUNTERS AND BUREAUCRATS: POWER, KNOWLEDGE, AND ABORIGINAL-STATE RELATIONS IN THE SOUTHWEST YUKON.** By PAUL NADASDY. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003. ISBN 0-7748-0983-3. xiii + 312 p., maps, b&w illus., notes, bib., index. Hardbound Cdn\$85.00; Softbound Cdn\$29.95 (July 2004).
- INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND GLOBAL RIGHTS.** Edited by SVEIN JENTOFT, HENRY MINDE & RAGNAR NILSEN. Delft, The Netherlands: Eburon Academic Publishers, 2003. ISBN 90-5166-978-X. ix + 315 p., b&w illus., 15 essays. Softbound. Euro 27,50.
- LIVES AND LANDSCAPES: A PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMOIR OF OUTPORT NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, 1949-1963.** By ELMER HARP, Jr. Edited by M.A.P. RENOUF. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003. ISBN 0-7735-2517-3. xxi + 265 p., maps, colour illus., bib., index. Hardbound. Cdn\$39.95; US\$34.95; UK£26.95.
- POLAR LOWS: MESOSCALE WEATHER SYSTEMS IN THE POLAR REGIONS.** Edited by ERIK A. RASMUSSEN and JOHN TURNER. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003. ISBN 0-521-62430-4. xi + 612 p., maps, b&w illus., bib., index. Hardbound. US\$120.00.
- REINDEER DAYS REMEMBERED.** By ELISA J. HART. Inuvik: Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre, 2001. ISBN 0-9683636-7-9. 112 p., map, b&w and colour illus., bib. Softbound. Cdn\$20.00 + \$5.00p&h.
- RELATIONS BETWEEN TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND WESTERN SCIENCE: A NORTHERN FORUM HELD AT CARLETON UNIVERSITY, OTTAWA, ONTARIO, 7 MARCH 2003.** Conference Report by MARY McGUIRE; Technical Production by MARK VALCOUR. CD-ROM. (Available from Dr. C.R. Burn,