Russians.

The Bruce collection provides an excellent opportunity to focus on changing Eskimo craftsmanship at a time when contacts with white people were becoming a significant factor in northwestern Alaska. For this purpose VanStone considers the collection in four categories: items equivalent to continuing indigenous implements; derived forms produced in imported material but patterned after earlier items; Western imports; and derived forms produced out of local material, but patterned on Western items. The author concludes that ". . . the sizeable number of Western-derived forms . . . indicates that the process of material culture change was already clearly defined in the late nineteenth-century, less than 50 years after the first sustained European contact in the area." (p. 51).

Following the system developed by Oswalt[3], VanStone applies indices of technological complexity to the collection. These are all lower in magnitude than the equivalents for several eastern and central Eskimo groups, the Caribou Eskimo excepted. Obviously, technological complexity as so measured does not necessarily equate to cultural complexity or degree of development, although one might tend to assume such.

This short monograph is intended primarily for Arctic specialists, but the type of study undertaken should be of interest to every museum curator. One particular situation is vividly described:

> The present condition of much of the Bruce collection is poor. Seventy-eight years of inadequate storage and damaging exhibition installation have taken their toll. Ivory, antler, bone and wood specimens are cracked and broken; occasionally pieces of particular specimens are missing. Sinew has disintegrated and skins have dried and split. The few remaining items of clothing that were not sold out of the collection have been badly damaged by insects and lack of humidity control in the storerooms. (p. 6).

Originally there were 735 catalogue entries representing a slightly greater number of specimens of which 209 are unaccounted for (44 apparently lost, and the remainder sold, exchanged or discarded).

The conditions described by VanStone are common in museums throughout Europe and North America. Some curators are aware of them, but only in particular cases do they have the resources to adequately conserve their collections. This reviewer therefore hopes that the study will encourage others to record and publish languishing collections before they lose their integrity due to dispersion and lack of conservation. Even by drawing attention to the neglected state of curation, especially the lack of proper storage, VanStone has done a service.

Donald W. Clark

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YUKON. By Jack Hope. Photographs by Paul Von Baich. *Toronto: Prentice Hall, 1976. 184 Pages. $35.00.*

In the near future, the Government of the Yukon will initiate measures to discourage the migration of southern Canadians to the territory — or at least, those who can be regarded as unskilled job-hunters and/or thrill-seekers; for construction of a natural-gas pipeline from Alaska through the southern Yukon, as recently decided upon by the Government of Canada, is expected to give rise to an enormous wave of in-migration to the territory that will likely have profoundly unfavourable social results.

The book here reviewed will not be helpful in discouraging such a movement, for it will serve to spur the imagination and arouse the desire of its readers to hit the road north. To put it simply, *Yukon* offers a vivid and eye-boggling glimpse of one of the last real frontier areas in the world.

Through the lens of a camera and by means of some very sensitive writing, a Canadian photographer and an American writer have tried to describe what the Yukon is really like today. To the extent that they concerned themselves with the inhabitants of its non-urbanized areas, they have probably succeeded. A common error, however, when looking at the North is to confidently believe that one has the total picture as a result of generalizations made concerning its inhabitants. This has not been avoided in the present book. The majority of the population of the Yukon that live in its one city, Whitehorse, are intentionally ignored because they work at commonplace jobs in a typical urban setting. In addition, there is hardly any reference to the original people of the Yukon — the status and non-status Indians — who comprise about a quarter of its population. Yet

in spite of these unfortunate deficiencies, the picture provided of the every-day lives of a fairly representative sample of frontier-living Yukoners appears to be an accurate reflection of reality, made all the more so by what seem to be verbatim accounts of interviews.

In certain chapters of the book reasons are sought for the endurance of the image of the Yukon as a lawless land, somehow frozen into a turn-of-century time capsule, populated by such stock characters as claim-jumpers, bearded sourdoughs, red-coated Mounties, and big-hearted dance-hall girls. In attempting to show why this image bears little resemblance to present-day reality the authors look closely at the solitary lives of some remarkable individualists, such as miners who still "moil for gold" in the Klondike, trappers whose essential lifestyles have not changed radically over the past several decades, mystic bush dwellers and hard-nosed engineers, big-game hunters, and an ardent and very articulate conservationist. While it is true that most of the people encountered in this book are not typical of the bulk of the population who live year-round in towns, their lives nevertheless illustrate the fact that the realities of the Yukon remain the physical ones of space and isolation, the sheer magnitude of its mountains, rivers and forests, and the abundance of its wildlife. As the authors have discovered, these realities give rise to attitudes of fear and respect on the one hand and desires to challenge and conquer the environment on the other. The Yukon being so different from the more settled parts of North America, reports of interviews with representative townsfolk and native people, had they taken place, would have added a dimension of interest to the book.

The book does not appear to answer one of the fundamental, and perhaps most important, questions that it raises: what is it that really attracts people to this unique frontier area and what causes them either to remain or to depart? Money and power are straightforward motivating factors, but one senses from the personal histories given in this book that the underlying reasons are rather an instinctive attraction to the land and the opportunity of leading a more independent life than is possible in the South. The truth of the matter would be very difficult to estabish. Author and photographer clearly however look upon the Yukon as a special area in which human and environmental considerations should as far as possible balance those of economic gain, be they expressed in volume of gas or weight of ore extracted. I expect many readers of the book will take a similar view.

Kenneth de la Barre

MUSKEG AND THE NORTHERN ENVIRONMENT IN CANADA. EDITED BY N. W. RADFORTH AND C. O. BRAWNER. *Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977. 399 pages, illus., maps. $35.00.*

In 1732, Linnaeus stated when describing muskeg in Lapland: "Never can the priest so describe hell, because it is no worse." Those who have had direct experience of the nature of muskeg, especially during the summer months, would probably agree.

The book here reviewed is an excellent compendium of papers prepared by Canadian investigators and presented at the Fifteenth Muskeg Conference in 1973. The papers mainly concern Canada where muskeg is concentrated in the spruce-tamarack zone extending from James Bay northwestward to Great Bear Lake and comprises an ecosystem of almost half a million square kilometres. Although some details remain to be worked out, the general characteristics and Canadian distribution of muskeg are now at hand with the issue of the present volume.

Part I concerns the general features of muskeg. The contributors describe the physical processes of muskeg formation, and how, through derangement of drainage patterns throughout Pleistocene history, the landscape acquired its present features. Excellent summaries are provided of the classification, distribution and hydrology of muskeg as well as the effects of permafrost and climate on its formation.

Part II concerns the utilization of muskeg resources. The paper on the interrelations of Canadian forests, soil varieties and muskeg distribution is of especial interest. Agricultural possibilities of muskeg are outlined and the various possibilities of using peat moss industrially are discussed. It is pointed out, however, that certain uses of the peaty material are economically dubious and discretion is therefore advised with regard to long-range plans. Research has shown that peat is potentially very useful for the treatment of polluted waters, as a source of activated carbon and as material for construction.

Part III, entitled "Environmental consideration", is an informative group of papers on road, pipeline and related construction problems in organic terrain. Also included in this part are reports on water resources and waste disposal. The concluding paper concerns wildlife and conservation.

Fifteen pages of technical terms give added value to the volume. The editors are to be congratulated on this excellent and definitive work.

J. C. F. Tedrow