

points out the possibilities for further development. It warrants a serious examination from concerned members of both constituencies.

Del Muisse

Peacock, David and Suzanne. *Old Oakville: A character study of the town's early buildings and of the men who built them.* Willowdale, Ont.: White/Hounslow Productions, 1979. 138pp., ill., index. \$16.50.

Oakville, Ontario, is many things to many people. It is a gracious lakeside community, an industrialized city that is home to (among others) the Ford Motor Company, and a dormitory suburb located some thirty expressway kilometres west of Toronto. Readers of *Old Oakville* would never suspect the latter two. This recent addition to the burgeoning small-city vanity press – conceived in the tradition of Peter John Stokes's much-admired *Old Niagara on the Lake* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971) – ignores much of the reality that is Oakville. It chooses instead to illustrate and describe forty-five houses and shops with nineteenth-century beginnings and locations near Lake Ontario, a safe distance from the factories and the highway.

Each building is treated to a textual character study researched by Suzanne Peacock and accompanied by an attractive and sensitive pen-and-ink drawing by her husband, David Peacock, (himself an advertising man who commutes to Toronto). Many entries are also illustrated by photographs, mostly old views or newly-taken details, or by a second drawing.

These character studies, like the town, are many things: architectural history (despite the authors' denial in the preface), genealogies of the houses and their owners, physical descriptions, and brief reports of contemporary status. The stylistic discussions are generally perceptive and sound even if the sequence of styles follows in the main the somewhat obsolescent terminology proposed in Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, *The Ancestral Roof* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1963). The human history is well-researched and interesting to read.

Where the book lets us down is in its failure to present the buildings as they really are (just as it failed to do the same with Oakville as a community). This omission is motivated by selectivity, not dishonesty. Drawings of the commercial buildings simply omit all details of the ground floors and their new storefronts; those of the houses often leave out certain altered portions or under-

play unwanted textures or details. In the few cases where both a drawing and a photograph are offered (for example, Potter's Folly, pp.97-99), we can appreciate the subtle interpretive changes in proportion and detail.

As a result the reader gains little understanding of the structure as historical artifact or of its contextual setting. Those primary documents, the building themselves, remain obscure. The reader is treated instead to the authors' nostalgic and idealized perception of Oakville as it might be, conveyed through seductive drawings and a text that sometimes reads like advertising copy. The James McDonald House, for example, "is endowed with a glow gained from long-time affection," and boasts hardware providing "proof that good design and good workmanship ... are forever functional and forever fashionable" (p.26). Another subtle time-warping device is the presentation of the date of the building's original construction in large 24-point type, ahead even of its name; a careful reading of the text often reveals that most of what stands today is the result of later alterations or a recent "restoration" (used a synonymous with "repair" or "renovation" since many of the restorations described do not – as the word should denote – go back to an earlier point in the building's history).

The careless approach to history is epitomized on the rear of the dustjacket. The blurb incorrectly cites the names of the Canadian Inventory of Historic Building, the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, and the Ontario Heritage Foundation – the three institutions most central to preservation in Ontario! Editor John Robert Columbo should have caught these.

These criticisms said and done the fact remains that *Old Oakville* is a handsome book – a delight to look at, to read, and to hold. David Peacock's fine design complements his drawings. The volume reveals a great deal about Oakville's rich architectural heritage and does it with distinction.

Harold Kalman

Summers, Jack L.; Chartrand, René; and Marrion, R.J. *Military uniforms in Canada, 1665-1970.* Canadian War Museum, Historical Publication no. 16. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1981. Also published in French as: *L'uniforme militaire au Canada, 1665-1970.* 192 pp. \$29.95 hardbound.

The questions most asked in military museum circles seem to be concerned with the minutiae of uniforms. This minutiae is of course important to those charged with re-

producing uniforms for public display and for interpretative staff to wear. Woe betide a curator who does not explore every available source before proceeding to the final drawing and the finished product. There is always a clever buff among the museum visitors who will explain with great relish and knowledge that really the lace on that uniform should be bastion-ended and not squared.

Until recently, the standard reference works on period uniforms have been by British authorities, particularly W.Y. Carman and C.C.P. Lawson. Unfortunately, when they show a frontal view of a uniform, one wishes to know what the back looks like. Since it is not within most museum budgets to pick up the phone and call Great Britain, the problem may seem insoluble. There are few experts on all historical military uniforms in Canada; however, there are individuals who are knowledgeable on particular periods. It is to be regretted that those who have responsibilities for uniforms do not direct their questions to these sources and improve their products.

René Chartrand; one of the authors of this book, has gained such a reputation as a source of information. With Jack Summers, and R.J. Marrion and after a number of years of research (if the dates on the illustrations are indicative), they have produced a book which gives a short history of each military unit selected, a description of its uniform, with an explanation of details, followed by a colour illustration of the uniform. The author's aim is "to depict the dress of some of the soldiers who played a significant role in Canada's development during the past 300 years." With the addition of the histories, they have done more than this. It is useful to have this information under one cover. The style of the histories tends to be disjointed, however, and they would benefit from being structured sequentially.

It is satisfying to read a book with great illustrations. Here are colourful and accurate drawings to please the most discerning eye. I particularly liked the Queen's Own Rifleman, looking dusty, unkempt, and tired. It seems to capture the prairie setting of the Northwest Rebellion. The National Museums of Canada should consider publishing individual prints suitable for framing. The average reader will find *The Cataloguing of Military Uniforms* by Ross and Chartrand a useful aid to the text relating to the illustrations, although a short glossary is included in *Military Uniforms of Canada*.

It becomes apparent to the reader of this book that military dress evolved with changes in tactics and weapons. The uniform of the Régiment De Guyenne was adapted to the environment in which the soldier lived and fought. The dress of the 1812 period portrays a soldier in a tall shako (designed to make the men look taller) and a tunic with wings (to make them look wider). This is a uniform for troops in line, firing an inaccurate weapon at close

quarters. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the uniforms change to satisfy the requirements of dispersion and increased fire power. The colour remains for ceremonial and drill purposes only. The last uniform in the book is the Canadian greens, and we may hope that new variations perhaps may brighten it up a bit.

Chartrand, Summers, and Marrion have filled a niche that has stood empty too long. They should be encouraged to undertake a follow-up volume on British regiments and corps who have contributed to Canadian history. This book is required reading for professionals and amateurs, history buffs, and model makers. One question puzzles me, however. What is a butcher boot?

Charles Bourque

Elliot, Robert S. *Matchlock to Machine Gun: The Firearms Collection of the New Brunswick Museum*. Saint John, N.B.: Brunswick Press, 1981. 64 pp., ill. \$12.95.

In the opening chapter of this catalogue, Robert Elliot indicates that his aims are to give the specialist a sampling of the firearms collection of the New Brunswick Museum and to give the non-specialist a brief introduction to the fascinating world of firearms. The author then presents the material he has chosen in the chronological sequence of development with chapters based on the various systems of ignition.

The catalogue contains photographs, mostly black and white, of some eighty-six rifles, muskets, and pistols. When he is illustrating parts of weapons, he has used photographs of actual items from the collection. This method of presentation gives the reader a better understanding than some of the more usual representative drawings. He has at the same time carefully avoided obscuring the picture with lines and text. In several cases one wishes the photographs had not been cropped; however, the essentials have been retained and the layout made more pleasant. In many of the photographs, contemporary artifacts have been added to give perspective to the weapons.

In any history of this size the specialist will find paragraphs with which he will want to argue or points that he thinks should be mentioned, but in general Elliot has expertly reduced a large and complex subject without sacrificing the essentials. The specialist will find sufficient material in the text and the illustrations to arouse his interest in the collection; non-specialists will find enough to spark their curiosity in both the history of firearms and the history of the province of New Brunswick. The glossary