

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

together with the selected bibliography will further assist the layman.

In this modern age of constant technological advance and almost instantaneous communication, it is sometimes difficult to realize that the time lapse between invention and general use in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could be as much as thirty years. The time-scale given in the catalogue will be of use, but it must be remembered that, while new technology may be discussed and exchanged at the princely plateaux of leisure and affluence, progress often ended there. A device invented in Toledo in

1600 might still be a novelty in Saxony or Canada twenty-five years later.

Within the limits imposed by the size of the catalogue, Robert Elliot has produced a pleasant and informative publication, of which the New Brunswick Museum can be proud.

J.D. Chown
