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son of Pierre, who led the expeditions into the West (p. 43). That episode was not a senseless act of savagery, but had been provoked by the involvement of the La Vérendryes in the slave trade, sending war captives from the west down to Québec as a means of financing their explorations. Incidentally, while the text makes clear that the organization early in the eighteenth century of the Seven Nations was a French idea (p. 46), it says nothing about its ineffectiveness in Amerindian politics.

As is clear from the above comments, this is not a definitive history, as by its very nature it has had to leave too much out. Tracing the course of events, even in minute detail, does not necessarily instruct us as to why they occurred, or took the paths that they did. Just as maps and illustrations can fill in where words fail, so can words explore realms beyond the scope of visual representation. In the final analysis, history remains a literary art. That said, this Atlas makes a valuable contribution in its visualization of the contact period of Great Lakes history, providing an alternate view that enriches our understanding.

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1885 and After: Native Society in Transition. Edited by F. Laurie Barron and James B. Waldram. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1986. 306 pp. \$15.00 (Canadian). Paperback.

Conference papers often do not result in satisfactory coverage of an historical theme. This collection of papers, concerning the Saskatchewan Rebellion of 1885, led by the Métis visionary Louis Riel, who had also led the previous resistance movement at Red River colony in 1869–70, and of Native society in transition thereafter in Western Canada stands as proof that proceedings can convey the impact of an armed rising against injustice and intrusion as well as the ensuing process of the loss of both territory and independence by the various Native groups of the region. Ten papers deal with the origins and events of 1885 confrontations, while nine others grapple with the aftermath and consequences of the Northwest Rebellion (as it is also called) over the next century. This division enables the editors and organizers of the conference to present the best and most recent scholarship

on native society in transition in Western Canada. Three hundred pages provide the reader with an adequate overview of events and with the most challenging and provocative interpretations of regional Native history over the past century.

Quite appropriately, George Stanley, as dean of Western Métis studies, leads off. He portrayed Louis Riel and his Métis in his original 1936 study as being caught up in a cultural struggle, but now he presents a re-evaluation of men and events under the image of the four faces of Riel: the defender of the French language and Catholic rights in the West; the half-breed patriot; the first Western Canadian "separatist" leader; the New World prophet and visionary. Olive Dickason sees parallels between the 18th Century Micmac resistance to the British takeover after the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) in Nova Scotia and Native resistance in the Northwest Territories in terms of "people fighting an intruding power for their lands and for their right to self-determination" (p. 31). There were also obvious differences, of course, as in the Northwest the issues were complicated by the presence of both Indian peoples and Métis peoples whose cultures, aspirations and power base differed, and also by the absence of a European power standing as a rival to the British exploiters. Previous historical work on Western Canada, such as André Lalonde's study of the colonization societies and Arthur Silver's work on Quebec's role and views on Western settlement have been woven skillfully and meaningfully into the collection. The work of John Jennings on relations with the Northwest Mounted Police, who stand in sharp contrast to the American cavalry in the same period, and John Tobias' work on the roots of the "treaty rights movement" are given much deserved wider circulation through this publication.

It is not our intention to comment on each of the papers. Instead, we propose to alert readers to some of the new research and projects which this volume introduces. Thomas Flanagan is without doubt the most controversial of the participants, having not only dabbled in psycho-history but also become one of Riel's fiercest critics after having been a staunch defender. In the process he crosses swords with historians who have been critical of the handling of Métis land claims and the issue of scrip. There are many areas of Native history which have been scarcely examined to date, but several papers in this collection introduce us to new interpretations and current research projects. The

agricultural program pursued on the Indian reserves, for example, has never been adequately evaluated. Was it successful or not? What were its veritable objectives? Noel Dyck gives us some preliminary insights into this subject. Laurie Barron has lately undertaken the study of the Indian agents—crucial officials standing between the Native peoples and the Indian Affairs bureaucracy. Only one Master's thesis to date has touched on this important topic, so we are grateful to Barron for introducing us to some of his current research.

A brilliant and revelatory research essay on the Métis society of Batoche after 1885 by Diane Payment undermines much of the traditional interpretation that has been part of accepted history. It is without doubt one of the most important and challenging papers in the collection.

The editors and the two Saskatchewan universities which supported the conference and the publication of the proceedings are to be congratulated for producing such an informative volume on what has sometimes been considered a threadbare event in Western Canadian history, so far as new evidence or interpretation are concerned. Indeed, every essay has the merit of highlighting some new evidence or the understanding of a watershed historical period. The book will also appeal to general readers, and we can recommend it to American readers who may not be very familiar with the events of 1885 in Western Canada. Native peoples should on no account remain ignorant of the significant historical research this collection of conference papers presents.

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Let the Past Go: A Life History. Narrated by Alice Jacob. Editing and Analysis by Sarah Preston. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada: Canadian Ethnology Service, Paper No. 104. 1986. 121 pp. \$6.00 (Canadian) Paper.

The body of this report is a series of four autobiographical narratives by a Cree woman in her mid-fifties, tape-recorded at Rupert House, James Bay, Quebec, in July 1978. Alice Jacob, who evidently does not speak English, related the stories in Cree, which are given a running translation by another Cree woman. It is this rough English rendering that is presented and analyzed.