

*Early Canadian Court Houses. Studies in Archaeology, Architecture and History. Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, 1983. Pp. 258. \$13.95*

W. Thomas Matthews

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than a superficial alleviation of the symptoms of distress. More importantly, hard times became the basis for completion of Saint John's integration into the Canadian urban system. In 1927, demoralized community leaders surrendered all of their remaining formal control over port facilities to the federal government, seeing this move as "a desperately needed mechanism to relieve the city of a responsibility it could no longer afford to bear."

Professor McGahan offers a story without a happy ending. Integration coincided with Saint John's subordination and severe curtailment of its prospects for expansion. All this is interesting, but the analysis would have been strengthened had the author placed her study within the context of the discussion now prevailing about the origins of regional disparity within Atlantic Canada. Why, for example, did Saint John fail to derive greater benefit from enhancement of its transportation links with central Canada? Did geography dictate that local expectations must be disappointed or should we probe the dynamics of monopoly capitalism for an explanation of Saint John's dilemma? Alternately, to what extent can it be argued that entrepreneurial failure (either inertia or miscalculation) was chiefly responsible for the negative character of this city's long term development? Unfortunately, these questions receive no discussion in Professor McGahan's book. The "ecological approach," at least as employed here, offers no synthesis of the basic elements operating to shape the history of post-Confederation Saint John. The reader is left to draw his own conclusions. Thus, although innovative, Professor McGahan's work falls short of becoming a landmark contribution to discussion of the city building process in Canada.

David A. Sutherland  
Department of History  
Dalhousie University

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*Early Canadian Court Houses*. Studies in Archaeology, Architecture and History. Ottawa: National Historic Parks and Sites Branch, Parks Canada, 1983. Pp. 258. \$13.95.

This volume makes a significant contribution to the growing body of literature dealing with the architectural heritage of Canadian cities. Seeking to examine court houses from the perspective of "the court systems they were built to serve, the choice of designs and means of construction employed . . . , and the roles" they "subsequently performed within their respective communities," the authors have uncovered a wealth of information concerning extant buildings constructed before 1914 in the Maritimes, Quebec and southern Ontario, and before 1930 in northern Ontario and the western provinces. In addition, the book is profusely illustrated. More than 180 drawings and photographs have been reproduced in the main text, and the appendix contains

an illustration of virtually every court house included in the study.

Even though the existence of a common judicial system gave rise to certain similarities, the pattern of court house construction varied significantly across the country. A regional perspective has therefore been adopted with a separate essay being devoted to each of the following areas — Newfoundland, the Maritime provinces, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairies and British Columbia. The six essays are characterized by an admirable attention to detail. Thoroughly researched and carefully documented, they trace the history of Canadian court houses from the time of settlement to the early twentieth century. The authors consider the judicial history of each region, and they ably relate politico-constitutional developments to the general pattern of court house construction. Particular emphasis is placed upon the task of documenting the circumstances surrounding the construction of each building. The authors focus on factors such as court house design and construction methods, and for the convenience of the reader, much of this information has been summarized in the appendix.

The essays by Kelly Crossman and Dana Johnson, André Giroux, and C.A. Hale will be of special interest to urban historians. In addition to providing a detailed account of the relevant construction facts, these authors tackle a number of broader issues relating to Canadian urban development. They illustrate, for example, that boosterism and inter-urban rivalry provided a major impetus to the construction of grandiose court houses "with sophisticated stylistic and decorative details." They also recognize the great symbolic importance of civic architecture. While discussing the ornamentation which embellished the buildings constructed in the Maritimes, C.A. Hale suggests that the inclusion of classical details stemmed from the "serious need for a distinct symbol of justice to represent and reinforce the new system of government." Similarly, André Giroux maintains that the use of brick and stone in Quebec was intended to "evoke the judicial system's image of durability," and as Kelly Crossman and Dana Johnson conclude, the court houses of nineteenth century Ontario symbolized the aspirations of that province's emergent urban communities. The symbolic importance of the early court houses could have been examined in a fuller and more systematic manner, but the authors of these three essays must be commended for initiating this difficult task.

The primary weakness of *Early Canadian Court Houses* is that it lacks cohesion. The authors do not employ a uniform approach and, although Margaret Carter's introductory remarks attempt to present an overview, neither the introduction nor the conclusion are capable of binding the disparate actions together. A clearer statement of the authors' goals, along with a more detailed comparison of the regional patterns of court house construction, could have been incorporated into the introduction. It is also unfortunate that many

of the illustrations are not of a higher quality. The study focuses on buildings which are still standing, and it is therefore difficult to understand why the authors have included blurred and poorly-composed photographs. Furthermore, the text contains a number of minor errors. Contrary to the caption accompanying the drawing by the Toronto architect John Chewett, for example, the Newcastle District Court House was not constructed in Hamilton, but in Hamilton Township. Errors such as this may cause some annoyance to the reader, but they do not alter the fact that *Early Canadian Court Houses* is a noteworthy study. This book undoubtedly will appeal to a wide range of readers, including heritage preservationists and urban historians, and hopefully it will contribute to a greater awareness of Canada's architectural heritage.

W. Thomas Matthews  
Department of History  
McMaster University

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Gordon, George and Brian Dicks, eds. *Scottish Urban History*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1983. Pp. x, 281. Tables, maps, index. £14.00.

Urban history made a slow start in Scotland but it has caught up a good deal in recent years. The work of Sydney Checkland, A.J. Youngson and Ian Adams is well known, Adams having essayed an ambitious survey volume, *The Making of Urban Scotland*, in 1978. However, Gordon and Dicks are right to claim that much remains to be done before Scottish urban history is squarely on the map, and this wide-ranging collection of essays is an appropriate way forward at this stage. Much the same strategy, of course, has been adopted by Artibise and Stelter in their efforts to promote Canadian urban history.

Like all things Caledonian, Scotland's urban history is bound to fascinate a Canadian readership. However, Canadian and Scottish cities are like chalk and cheese. Scottish culture crossed the Atlantic readily enough, but Scottish legal institutions were mostly left behind. Scottish migrants, much like the French Canadians, had to toe the English legal line once British North America began to assume its present shape and identity after the American War of Independence. Cities are, to a degree, cultural artifacts but land law seems to have been the main creator of Scotland's distinctive, high-density, urban form. In this volume and elsewhere, R.G. Rodger argues that Scotland's unique feuing system drove up the price of urban land and, in combination with low effective demand for housing, generated the tenement block. In Canada, the tenement system emerged in a distinct form only in Quebec, and it is the Montreal 'duplex' which echoes the cottage flats and larger apartment houses of Scotland's cities. Another contributing factor, urban fortifi-

cation, was also more a feature of Lower than of Upper Canada; it was, after all, a Louis who quipped that so much stone had been put into a Canadian citadel that it must surely be visible from Europe. Canadian and Scottish urban history have one thing in common, however. As we discovered at the Guelph conference in 1982, American urban historians know little about Canada whereas Canadians are expected to be fully cognisant of developments south of the border. Much the same relationship exists between Scottish urban history and that of its more populous southern neighbour. Canadians will be on the Scottish side in this British contest of the histories.

It is difficult to resist drawing parallels between *Scottish Urban History* and *The Usable Urban Past* and *Shaping the Urban Landscape*. Like Canada's, Scotland's early urbanisation has generally been dismissed as backward or insignificant. The answer is to draw on new evidence or to extrapolate from broader historical developments. In "The Scottish Medieval Town: A Search for Origins," B. Dicks joins an important European trend when he draws on accumulating archaeological evidence to suggest that towns existed in Scotland before they appear in the written record in the twelfth century. He also points out, convincingly, that even the rudimentary forms of exchange which existed in early medieval Scotland would have required a degree of urban concentration. R.C. Fox narrows the focus to pre-industrial Stirling. He provides a comprehensive portrait of the town between 1550 and 1700, with particular emphasis on morphogenesis in the Conzenian tradition, once again towards the top of the agenda among British geographers. Even more original is R.G. Rodger's identification of a continuous Scottish urban planning tradition stretching from the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries under the aegis of the Dean of Guild Courts. One might question whether rudimentary activities such as the oversight of property boundaries constitute urban planning, but the continuity of Scottish urban management established by Rodger merits Europe-wide attention. However, Scotland's minor status as a historical problem, even more peripheral to Europe than it is to Britain, makes such a diffusion unlikely. The unexpected dynamism and technical competence of pre-industrial Scotland are also reflected in T.M. Devine's study of urban merchants in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Attacking the implausible over-simplification whereby Scottish agriculture was revolutionised while urban enterprise stagnated, Devine aligns himself with the increasingly influential view that urban and rural economies cannot be considered separately — a stance which commends itself particularly, of course, to Canadian urban historians.

The articles devoted to the industrial period are, inevitably perhaps, less innovative. J.G. Robb and G. Gordon write about nineteenth century residential differentiation, in Glasgow and Edinburgh respectively. Gordon's delineation of status areas in the capital is a variation on a familiar theme of his, but it supports Robb's conclusion, derived from his