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Reviews of Books

W. O. Kupsch and W.A.S. Sarjeant, editors, *History of Concepts in Precambrian Geology*. Toronto: The Geological Association of Canada, 1979; xiii + 292 pp.

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THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

University of Toronto (Institute for History and Philosophy of Science and Technology):

Norman R. Ball, The Technology of Settlement and Land Clearing in Upper Canada prior to 1840 (Ph.D., 1979).

Vittorio de Vecchi, Science and Government in Nineteenth-Century Canada (Ph.D., 1978).

James O. Petersen, Technology and Social Change in the Mining Community of Northern Ontario (Ph.D., 1977).

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

W. O. Kupsch and W.A.S. Sarjeant, editors, History of Concepts in Precambrian Geology. Toronto: The Geological Association of Canada, 1979; xiii + 292 pp.

This work, the nineteenth in a series of publications of the Geological Association of Canada, is the record of a symposium held in Montreal in 1972 under the auspices of the International Committee on the History of Geological Sciences. As historians of the geosciences are relatively few, it is not surprising that this volume is the work of geologists with historical interests. As such, the contributions tend to be heavily technical. Since precambrian formations are found in many parts of the world, the history of their study in many countries is included with the greatest emphasis upon Britain and Sweden.

Three of the articles deal specifically with Canadian geology. Walter Kupsch writes on the boundary of the Canadian shield, briefly tracing the changing views on the extent of precambrian rock from Logan's time to 20th-century aerial photography. A.H. Lang and V. Ruzicka discuss geological side-effects of the search for radioactive minerals in the shield: these spin-offs, such as new mapping techniques, new instruments and analytical methods, are of relatively recent vintage--1930s onward--and this historical survey is more of a literature review. Finally, J.S. Stevenson contributes a paper on the geological concepts developed for the study of precambrian rocks of Sudbury. This is, again, essentially a twentieth-century story. The historian of science and technology, unless equipped with more than a nodding acquaintance of geology, will find this collection of only marginal use. It does, however, provide valuable background information on the scientific side; its greatest value is the rich set of references.

-R.A.J.