

A Harvest Yet to Reap: A History of Prairie Women, edited by Linda Rasmussen, Lorna Rasmussen, Candace Savage, and Anne Wheeler. Toronto: The Women's Press, 1976. Distributed by the University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska. pp. 240. Photographs, index. \$12.50.

Americans know little about Canadian history; they know even less about Canadian women's history. This book provides useful information about both. The editors have chosen to limit their coverage to "white women on the Canadian prairies in the early years of agricultural settlement" (p. 8). Although this choice excludes many women, it is, as the editors say, "a place to begin."

A Harvest Yet to Reap combines a photographic essay with a collection of documents. Both the photos and the text survey all types of female activity, from the details of the daily lives of anonymous women to the political and reform efforts of an educated elite. The editors have made skillful use of archival material, published memoirs, and farmers' weeklies in their selection of the documents; the pictures are chosen from private collections and public archives. They admit to a certain "untidiness" of organization. The book begins with a chapter on moving west, continues with a section on life on the prairies, and then moves to chapters on women's organizations and their goals, including political, especially suffrage, activities. The editors have "given precedence to a chronology of psychological, social and political developments" (p. 8) rather than confining themselves to simple dates. The book also includes a brief bibliography, short biographies of female leaders, and a timeline of events that were of importance to women.

This volume is always interesting. It contains complete descriptions of the daily tasks performed on farms and reveals the importance of women's labor to family survival and the health of the economy at large. There are heroines aplenty, by all definitions of that word. Women who struggled alone on the prairie and women who organized and led reform movements receive equal time. Their stories, told in their own words, are by turns horrifying, humorous, enlightening, and deeply moving. The accompanying photos are beautifully done. This is a very personal sort of history; it presents faces and voices from another time and place—so close to our own and yet so different from our own. Many of the issues it discusses remain with us, still unresolved, a fact that the title of the book so nicely points out.

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