

New Owners in Their Own Land

E.R. Ward Neale

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REVIEWS

New Owners in Their Own Land

by **Robert McPherson**

The University of Calgary Press

2500 University Drive N.W.

Calgary AB T2N 1N4

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Reviewed by **E.R. Ward Neale**

5108 Carney Road N.W.

Calgary, Alberta T2L 1G2

Our northernmost people are frequently mentioned on the business pages of Canada's newspapers. We read that the partners in the \$5 billion Mackenzie Valley pipeline, who already include the Inuvik-based Aboriginal Pipeline Group, are being asked multimillion dollar land-access fees by native bands along the pipeline route. At the other end of the country, benefit agreements between Inco and the Innu Nation for development of the Voiseys Bay, Labrador, nickel deposit are said to hold good prospects of steady jobs and a productive future for the indigenous people. Things seem to be looking up for our long neglected northerners. So how did this come about?

This aptly titled book provides answers that apply to the inhabitants of that vast part of Arctic Canada, 20 percent of our landmass, now known as Nunavut. It describes the events of three or more decades that led to the Land Agreement between the Inuit people and the Government of Canada in 1993. It tells of the motivations that drove a scant, widely scattered population to organize, demand and eventually win control and ownership rights. This account of history in the making is by one who knows whereof he writes. Robert McPherson spent his career in mineral exploration and the last 20 years of it in the north. He was

an adviser to the Inuit on the land selection process as it pertained to subsurface mineral rights. He wrote his book in retirement while an Associate with the Arctic Institute of North America.

This is essential reading for mineral or energy explorationists. McPherson states that prospecting, exploration and mining activities were the catalysts that brought about the 1993 Agreement. Many examples are given of the abuses that led to Inuit concerns about disruption of their culture, desecration of the environment and impact on wildlife and traditional livelihoods. It tells also of how they came to view government and industry as close partners who had little interest in Inuit concerns and whose consultation processes were a sham. This is what led them to strive for management boards to regulate, impose standards and engage in joint planning procedures. They were not against development but they wanted to be part of it, to have some control over its impact and to enjoy some of its benefits.

The resulting Agreement is a beacon to aboriginal people everywhere and of interest to all thinking Canadians. McPherson's details of how the Inuit organized to bring it about makes this publication a guidebook. With roots in an Ottawa-based volunteer native rights group, the Indian Eskimo Association (IEA) was founded in 1960 by a wide variety of scholars, educators and church people from across the country to provide research, fund-raising and advocacy for aboriginal people. Generously supported by over 2000 members and by the private sector, its ultimate aim was to produce self-sustaining aboriginal associations. A talented IEA field worker, Coral Harbour native Tagak Curley, brought together Inuit leaders from Keewatin to the eastern Arctic to form the Inuit

Tapirisat (Brotherhood) of Canada in 1971. From its beginnings, the Tapirisat (ITC) was interested not only in Inuit culture and independence but also in successful development of the Arctic regions. Much of the book is devoted to the ITC's interventions and challenges to government and industry. The penultimate chapter "New Owners" is gripping as it describes the long process of consensus building after agreement in principle was reached in 1990. The author and his colleagues played a major role here as they attended meetings in isolated communities and delineated pockets of subsurface rights that they felt should be part of any agreement. The upshot was that the Inuit were awarded ownership of 356,000 square km., 17.7 percent of Nunavut, and they own subsurface rights to a carefully selected 10.8 percent of this. The Agreement makes the Inuit the largest freehold owners in Canada, larger even than the C.P.R.

In a final, short summary chapter, the author agrees with Government negotiator, Tom Malloy, that the agreement is essentially about people working together – not only for the benefit of Inuit but for all of Canada. McPherson goes further and feels that the Inuit may form their own community-based exploration groups and may one day aspire to take on responsibility for all Crown lands in Nunavut. "They will then become the true custodians of the North for the benefit of all Canadians."

The book is pitched at the intelligent lay reader but offers special appeal to those with interest in mining and geology. Tribute is paid to the early G.S.C. mapping by giants of the past such as J.B. Tyrrell and Lud Weeks. Comprehensive accounts are offered of exploration highlights and the development of producing mines, e.g. Rankin Inlet Nickel, on the west coast of Hudson Bay, which produced from

1955 to 1962 and the Nanisivik base metal mine in north Baffin Island, active from 1976 to 2002. Serious Inuit concerns stem from the Rankin Mine and its aftermath. Serious Inuit involvement (through the ITC) stems from the early years and led to satisfactions in the late years of Nanisivik. Throughout, readers with geological or mining backgrounds will be delighted to see the names of former colleagues and acquaintances (and even onetime classmates!) in Arctic roles that we may not even have guessed. Also, we'll meet Isaac Attagutsiak "one of the true founders of Nanisivik", Allie Salluviniq – a survivor of the Government resettlement program at Resolute, and many more colourful bit players in this Arctic pageant.

A serious criticism is the lack of a legible location map. A drastically reduced, coloured map of "Inuit Owned Lands in Nunavut" on the inside of the front cover does justice to the surface and mineral rights land locations. However, most of its print is not readable with the naked eye so, if you can't remember where Coral Harbour, Arctic Bay, or Grise Fiord are located, you may have to resort to your hand lens! Apart from that oversight, it's a really great read. Learn while you enjoy.

Geology of the Garibaldi Lake Region, Garibaldi Provincial Park

By M.C. Kelman, C.J. Hickson, and P.R. Hill

Geological Association of Canada Trail Guide No. 1, 2004; \$5.50 (lower prices for bulk orders: www.gac.ca)

*Geological Association of Canada
Department of Earth Sciences
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland A1B 3X5*

Reviewed by Johannes Koch

*Quaternary Geoscience Research
Centre/Department of Earth Sciences
Simon Fraser University Burnaby, British Columbia V5A 1S6 E-mail: jkoch@sfu.ca*

This colourfully illustrated trail guide for a heavily used area in Garibaldi Provin-

cial Park is a welcome companion for every hiker with an interest in the surrounding geology. It is written with the layman in mind. Accordingly, the format of the guide makes it easy to read and all the graphs are easily understood.

The guide is a foldable map and thus is easy to carry around. Also, the use of waterproof paper makes it ideal to take along on a hike. The guide comprises two maps, one on each side of the page, surrounded by explanatory notes. The first map is a relief map of the immediate surroundings of Garibaldi Lake. Names discussed in the text are shown on the relief map, as is the trail from the parking lot to the campground at Garibaldi Lake. Along this trail six viewpoints are indicated and cross-referenced to several inset boxes. Each of these boxes shows a photo of the corresponding feature and explains its geological origin. The reverse side of the trail guide shows the geology of a greater area surrounding Garibaldi Lake and general information on geological processes that affect southwest British Columbia and the map area specifically. The text fields are clearly separated and succinct, and keep the reader interested.

Unfortunately, the guide has some weaknesses and errors that diminish its usefulness. One would hope that a revised version will update and correct these.

The relief map gives a good impression of the area, but no elevations are given. Elevations of Garibaldi Lake and some of the surrounding peaks would have helped readers, especially those with an untrained eye, to appreciate the topography. Also, several inaccuracies occur on both maps. The location of viewpoint B on the relief map is wrong. Some lakes have been omitted from the relief map, the most important of which is Barrier Lake (although, confusingly, its name still appears). Several trails lead away from the campground at Garibaldi Lake and one wonders why they are not shown on the relief map, especially considering that the distances along these trails are given in the text and since many features along these trails are discussed.

This leads to one of the most unfortunate shortcomings of this document. Some of the features discussed cannot be observed from the viewpoints they are referenced to. This is the case for three out of eight boxes. Cinder Cone, The Table, and Mount Garibaldi cannot be seen from the viewpoints indicated (but the above-mentioned trails do lead to stellar viewpoints of each of these features). Unfortunately, four of the eight boxes show features photographed either from ground locations other than the hiking trails, or from an aircraft. Also, that Mount Garibaldi is shown from the south near Squamish, and not from the north where the trails are, is surprising, as Mount Garibaldi looks very different when viewed from these two directions.

The geology map is also not without mistakes. The geological units shown on the map appear to be approximations as some of the lines are impossible to explain otherwise. That the trail to Garibaldi Lake is shown to take a different path on this map compared to the relief map is very unfortunate. The two lakes missing on the relief map are shown on the geological map. Furthermore, Mount Price and Clinker Peak are shown in different locations on the two maps – unfortunately wrong both times(!) – and the photo for viewpoint F, which is supposed to show both mountains, is only half correct. Sadly, more errors could be listed.

However, despite its shortcomings the map is a welcome introduction to the surrounding geology for the layman. Considering that this area of Garibaldi Provincial Park awaits with many intriguing geological features, it is a well-chosen map area. I hope that this map will find its way to outlets where the general public, who make this one of the most heavily used parks in British Columbia, can find and buy it.

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