

shoddy copy-editing allowed by Torstendahl's publisher has not helped matters. We read here that "a category...were" (p. 174), that "statistics...is complicated" (I'll say they is! p. 182), that things fall "outside of this investigation" (p. 156), and that political parties have "their time at the power" (p. 139). Misplaced negatives make some statements nonsensical (p. 141). Worse, the reader is belaboured repeatedly with passages of leaden prose: "Doubtless, private initiative led the development into its new organisational era under Organized Capitalism. Industry organised work and federations of industries in order to dominate markets and market relations, while workers organised themselves to protect their interests against employers, and professionals tried to cartelise the supply of certain knowledge. It is not just a play with words to call all this organisation. There is a common denominator. Organisation asked for administration and thus bureaucratisation got an unprecedented impetus in the countries where Organized Capitalism got a foothold" (p. 119).

Is Torstendahl or his editor responsible for this typically lucid "analysis"? A moot question, and one to which this reviewer easily preferred that of finding the shortest route to page 339.

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Reginald H. Roy. *Sherwood Lett: His Life and Times*. Vancouver: UBC Alumni Association, 1991. Pp. 180, illus. \$29.95.

Few if any people who are associated with the University of British Columbia will fail to recognize the name of Sherwood Lett. They may not know who he was, however, or why one of UBC's residences carries his name. This sensitive, well-written biography by the University of Victoria's Reginald Roy makes abundantly clear why Lett deserves to be remembered not only by UBC alumni and faculty but by Canadians generally. As well as being a lifelong friend of UBC, he was a distinguished soldier, lawyer, and jurist.

Sherwood Lett arrived in Vancouver from the Ottawa Valley in 1912 as a teenager, fifth among the seven children of the Reverend Frank Lett, a Methodist clergyman, and his wife Dana Sherwood. Later that year Sherwood registered in Vancouver's McGill University College, soon afterwards absorbed by the new University of British Columbia. He was bright, athletic, and friendly, with "a driving energy, a determination to succeed, and a charming and attractive personality" (p. 10). A very popular young man, he was elected in 1915 president of the Alma Mater Society, whose constitution he had helped to draft.

Even before graduating, Lett signed up as a lieutenant in the 121st battalion. He was short and looked younger than his 20 years; his fellow officers later called him "Kewpie." He

became interested in signalling. "Considering the casualty rate of infantry officers in the front line, it was an interest which, in the long run, probably saved his life" (p. 22). Posted to England and given a signalling staff job in the summer of 1916, he reached the front a year later as a signalling officer with the 46th Battalion, seeing action in the deadly swamps at Passchendaele in October 1917. Although he subscribed to the conventional justifications of the war, the Passchendaele campaign left him with bitter memories and the conviction that Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig had blundered. Early in 1918 he wrote: "The war seems so useless, so senseless and so interminable" (p. 40). But he soldiered on and received the Military Cross after the Battle of Amiens in August. The war did not destroy his religious faith but modified it considerably. The church ceased to play a major role in his life, yet the principles of Methodism continued to influence his behaviour.

Back home by June 1919, Lett began his articles with a law firm and became the first president of the UBC Alumni Association. Before long he applied for and got a Rhodes Scholarship, more for his character and athletic ability than his academic achievements, and spent two enjoyable years reading law at Trinity College, Oxford. Admitted to the bar soon upon his return to Vancouver in 1922, he embarked upon the practice of corporate law. After he was made a partner of his firm in 1928 he married a UBC classmate, Evelyn Story. They had two daughters.

Although Lett flourished in his profession, he did not allow it to monopolize his life. He was a prominent sports- and clubman, a member of Round Table and the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, a militia officer (commanding officer of the Irish Fusiliers by 1932) and an active Liberal. As well, he was a dogged fighter for the interests of UBC. "The tremendous energies which he devoted to the church before the war became channelled into education after the war" (p. 92). He was a member of the university Senate for more than 30 years, a longtime member of the Board of Governors and, from 1951 to 1957, Chancellor. His activities within and on behalf of the University were particularly evident in 1932, after heavy cuts (almost 60 per cent in two years) in the provincial grant brought UBC to the brink of collapse. He failed in 1938 in an effort to help establish a Faculty of Law, but was successful seven years later.

In May 1940, aged nearly 45, Lett again volunteered for active service. "One of [his] outstanding characteristics as a soldier was his ability to train men" (p. 103). Promoted to the rank of brigadier in March 1942 and appointed to command the 4th Canadian Infantry Brigade, Lett thereby became associated with that dismal chapter in our military history, the ill-conceived, ill-starred raid on Dieppe. (Was anybody else at both Passchendaele and Dieppe? It seems unlikely.) He was wounded, received the DSO, was invalided home, and served for eighteen months as Deputy Chief of the General Staff before resuming command of the 4th Brigade in

February 1944. Offered appointment to the Supreme Court of Canada, he declined because, with the invasion of France imminent, he wished to remain with his men. He was wounded at Louvigny in July 1944, was awarded the CBE, and did not again see action, being discharged as medically unfit early in 1945.

For the next few years Lett served his profession, his university, his city, and his country in a variety of ways. Most important of these was a year's service (1954-55) as a member of the International Supervisory Commission in Vietnam. This body, created by the Geneva Agreement of 1954, had three Commissioners. Lett was often irritated by the Polish representative, P. Ogrodzinski, who clearly was working to advance the interests of the Soviet Union, but liked Manilal Desai, the Indian chairman of the Commission. Lett was impressed by Ho Chi Minh, General Vo Nguyen Giap, and the North Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Phan Van Dong.

Soon upon his return to Canada he took office as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia. His most important judgement was in the case that originated in Premier W.A.C. Bennett's high-handed Power Development Act of 1961 and the 1962 amendments to it. Lett ruled in favour of BC Power. The provincial government did not appeal this judgement, instead joining BC Power in asking Lett to fix the final compensation due to the shareholders. "It is difficult to imagine a greater tribute to the Chief Justice's integrity than this request" (p. 166). In August 1963 he became Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, the

highest judicial post in British Columbia. Unfortunately, he died within a year, a victim of cancer.

His one regret, Roy writes in introducing the book, is that he never met Sherwood Lett. He evidently was a man of great ability, energy, probity, courage, and decency. His only major failing seems to have been that he too often and too easily neglected his roles as husband and father in favour of his work and his sense of duty.

My one regret is that this biography is so brief. We learn a good deal about Lett's life but little about his times. One might have wished for more information even about his life. For example, Roy cursorily discusses Lett's interest in politics but fails to deal with an obvious question: why did he never become a candidate for public office? (Perhaps the answer rests in a cartoon I have on my office door. An older man says to a younger: "One day you'll realize that the people capable of running the country are too smart to get into politics.") All the same, it is no small tribute to a book to say that one wishes it were longer.

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James M. Wallace. *Liberal Journalism and American Education, 1914-1941.* New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press,