

speaking, the data are acceptable, but occasionally the details of some incidents vary slightly from those recorded by other historians. One point should be noted, and it pertains to the organ in the chapel at "Depot". That instrument was *not* obtained "through subscriptions of members of the congregation". It was presented to the Force by the Robert Simpson Company Ltd. of Canada in 1941.

In conclusion, this book is well worthwhile reading. It connotes a tremendous amount of work and effort on the part of the author, with very gratifying results; doubtless it will gain a high place in the pyramiding miscellany of tales about the RCMP. The generous offering of pictures and maps, the former showing the Force at work in all its spheres of activity, the latter aiding the reader to visualize more accurately the setting in which the drama of the RCMP unfolds, tends to increase the historical worth of this latest volume on *The Men of the Mounted*. E.J.D.

SOME OF IT WAS FUN, by Wallace Reyburn. Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., Toronto, Canada. Cartoons by Peter Whalley. Pp. 199 including index. \$3.

It is said that everyone is capable of telling one good story. Perhaps that explains the flock of war stories that appear on the market after every conflict, for a war is undoubtedly the biggest experience in the lives of those who have participated in one. Most of these stories are the products of former "top-brass" officers, ex-prisoners of war, government officials; a few are from the pens of professional writers. With a few exceptions these books enjoy a brief popularity, then die a quiet and painless death. In a way the aftermath of World War II has varied slightly; the books didn't all appear at once . . . but they are still coming.

After reading *Some Of It Was Fun* this reviewer is convinced that Wallace Reyburn will not achieve immortality by writing it. We do think though, that the author has done us a distinct favor by writing this particular type of war book. As he says: "One point about war is that you tend to forget afterwards the unpleasant side . . . and remember . . . the fun you had." This may be a good point or a bad one, depending on how you look at it. At any

rate Mr. Reyburn, one of Canada's top War Correspondents, has certainly shown us the more humorous side of the late war. He does it in a very friendly sort of way too, but with a serious piece thrown in here and there just to remind us that war really isn't fun for a lot of people.

All men should enjoy the book—it is being advertised as "definitely a man's book"—which means that most sales will be made to women.

The pages are humorously illustrated with cartoons by Peter Whalley. A.P.

BLANKETS AND BEADS: A History of the Saskatchewan River, by James G. MacGregor. Institute of Applied Art Ltd., Edmonton, Alta. \$2.

Blankets and Beads is an excellent and lively history of the North Saskatchewan River and its environments. The author, who is manager of the Canadian Utilities of Edmonton, has visualized the stirring life of the pioneers so realistically that the reader can live with these hardy men from 1749 until the country was settled and the river ceased to be an artery of travel.

The book starts with a concise dissertation on the various ethnological and geological periods preceding the advent of the white man to North America. The author then deals with the Indians and their mode of life. In his opinion their decadence was due to the four gifts of their white brothers: the horse, the gun, smallpox and alcohol.

It is obvious that the author personally knows the Saskatchewan from source to mouth and his style is as stirring and simple as the men he writes about. Many of his passages vividly catch the beauty of the country as he traces the footsteps of the fur traders over this immense and new territory 200 years ago.

In writing of the voyageurs' 18-hour day on pemmican and water with an occasional tot of rum he says: "After a few hours sleep they would wake up refreshed and eager to go on again, particularly if the sun were shining in all the glory of August. Mists would be rising from the water and the whole valley would be blanketed in mist. The sun, shining on the hilltops, would dispel the mist and, for a few hours, while their clothes dried on their backs, life would seem worthwhile to the rowers."