

## *Notices*

**C.W. Mathers' Vision: 1893-1905.** PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA. Edmonton: Historical Resources Division, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, 1989. 70 p. illus. \$5.00.

This exhibition catalogue pays tribute to the photography of C.W. Mathers, Edmonton's first resident professional photographer. During twelve years of activity in the midst of escalating change in the Northwest Territories, Mathers produced a fine body of work which speaks eloquently of evolving society and landscape.

The Provincial Archives' exhibition and catalogue seeks, in the words of Provincial Archivist Brian Speirs, "... to remove Mathers from the shadow of [Ernest] Brown so that he can receive the recognition he deserves." Brown, who became owner of Mathers' negatives while responsible for their preservation, frequently imposed his credit line on the plates, thereby misleading subsequent viewers for many years. The exhibition and catalogue go a long way toward confirming Mathers' creativity and rightful place as one of western Canada's finest early photographers.

Brock V. Silversides provides a thorough essay on Mathers' life and work, and places the photographer's arrival in Calgary and subsequent rise to prominence in Edmonton within the context of the history of photography in the West. He describes the potent forces at work which shaped the emerging province, forces which are illustrated in Mathers' photographs.

Twenty-nine plates provide a representation of Mathers' views of settlement, agriculture, mining, manufacturing, transportation, and urban development. Several fine portrait studies are also included, portraiture being an important aspect of Mathers' business. However, he also photographed beyond the comfortable environs of Edmonton and obtained remarkable views of life among the native people and Inuit as far north as the Arctic Circle.

The authors have missed an opportunity to provide a bibliographic description of the Mathers photographs and their place within the Brown collection, and to discuss any finding aids available. This would have been a worthwhile addition to a fine publication.

**Donald J. Bourdon**

Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

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