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THE COPPER SPIKE. BY LONE E. JANSON. *Anchorage, Alaska: Alaska Northwest Publishing Co. 1975. 11 x 8½ inches, paperback, 175 pages. \$5.95.*

Those Alaskans who read *The Copper Spike* will recognize, in Lone Janson's story of the building of the Copper River and Northwestern Railway and the battles it had with resource development and non-development interests, many similarities to the controversies regarding the trans-Alaska oil pipeline and its accompanying haul road. Generally, the same cast of characters is present: local "boomers", local residents content with the status quo, insensitive bureaucrats, rabid editors, frustrated engineers and technicians, national conservation agencies, and multinational corporations. The author conveys clearly the bitterness of many Alaskans against the influence of outside forces, especially the government interference that was a direct result of the first major conservationist protests led by Gifford Pinchot. It does not take much knowledge of Alaskan history to trace a direct line between the failure to reconcile development and conservation interests at that time and the present failure to achieve any reconciliation in Alaska.

Lone Janson sets out clearly the short term effects on small communities of resource development in her story of three cities, Valdez, Cordova, and Katalla. Her book contains much material which Alaska's present municipal leaders would do well to study. The role of the speculator, and his harmful effect upon real development interests, is vividly described in her portraits of Michael Heney, the master engineer and builder, and Henry Reynolds, the promoter.

The author relates the history of the Kennecott Mines, an eminently successful development, and contrasts it with the story of the Bering River coal fields and the blocking of their development by the government, a story that has enraged Alaskans for the past seven decades. It is important that Alaskan readers weigh the successful development, as well as the unsuccessful venture, in their evaluation of history as presented in *The Copper Spike*.

Also of special interest to those concerned with present-day Alaskan developments should be the aftermath of the Kennecott development, especially the way in which the question of transportation for the population left behind after the closure of the mines was handled. The problems created by the closing down of the Copper River and Northwestern Railway in 1938 still plague the present state administration as residents of Cordova seek the surface access to the interior of Alaska lost almost forty years ago. Anyone who has responsibility for decisions on the trans-Alaska oil pipeline and its haul road will gain from reading this account of a similar transportation system built primarily for development of a specific mineral find.

Lone Janson has written a straightforward history which makes no effort to analyse from a neutral point of view the struggles between developer and conservationist, between local values and national values. Rather, she has brought to her story all the passions and prejudices of the people and the period about which she writes. This is a book which has been written from the point of view of Alaskans living in the affected communities of Valdez, Cordova, and Katalla. The author writes as one who has had a life-long exposure to the events of which she writes, and in her vivid, raw perspective she makes no apology for presenting her story from the standpoint of those who had to live with decisions of governmental and corporate bureaucrats living several thousand miles away.

Walter B. Parker