



Hobnobbing with a Countess and Other Okanagan Adventures: The Diaries of Alice Barrett Parke, 1891--1900 (The Pioneers of British Columbia)

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In 1889, Alice Barrett moved west from Ontario to the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia to keep house for her brother and uncle. She soon married Harold Parke, a former military officer, and recorded her experiences in a series of notebooks.

Few women's diaries have survived from that time, and Parke recalls a period of profound transformation in a region newly opened to white settlement by the railway. She was an astute observer and an exceptional writer, and her diaries provide valuable insights into work, health, religion, race and gender relations, and women's lives. She was part of the circle of the Countess of Aberdeen, who stayed at nearby Coldstream Ranch, and became the first corresponding secretary of the Vernon chapter of the National Council of Women.

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