

A Hard Man to Beat: The Story of Bill White: Labour Leader, Historian Shipyard Worker, Raconteur (Vancouver 125 Legacy Books)



Bill White (1905-2001) was an itinerant ranch hand and trapper, a member of the RCMP and an Arctic traveller, but he was best known for his work as the head of the Vancouver Labour Council and president of the Marine Workers and Boilermakers Union, the largest local union in Canada in his time. It was a position he held for eleven straight years during WWII, the heyday of the West Coast shipbuilding industry. Known as Bareknuckle Bill, White was fierce and unrelenting in his condemnation of the companies and governments that refused to treat their workers like human beings. He personally fought one of the first big right-to-work cases in BC history, all the way to the Privy Council of England. From the scaffolds and docks of the shipyards to the battleground of the bargaining table, White's stories about the struggle for labour and human rights in Vancouver in the 40s and 50s make for harrowing and fascinating reading. *A Hard Man to Beat* not only covers all the major labour events of the period, but brings to life the personality of the man, Bill White, in his own colourful and sometimes expletive-filled language. Author Howard White spent years of intensive research and worked closely with Bill to create this oral history, which sold out its first printing in two days when it was first published in 1983. *A Hard Man to Beat* is one of ten Vancouver 125 Legacy books, an initiative created by the City of Vancouver, the Office of Vancouver's Poet Laureate Brad Cran and the Association of Book Publishers of BC to bring back into print a collection of books to celebrate Vancouver's 125th anniversary.

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