

Quill and Quire (February, 1974)

**THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE: A Century of History, Nora & William Kelly, Hurtig, \$10.00, 318 pp.**

The centennial anniversary of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has inspired scores of books ranging from glowing official histories and elaborate pictorial essays to unabashed and highly critical exposes. This volume written by William H. Kelly, a veteran of almost thirty years with the force and his wife Nora Hickson Kelly, reviews the history of the RCMP from its origins as a simple body of prairie horsemen to the computerized police force of today.

Mr. Kelly is a former Director of Security and Intelligence and he makes good use of this experience when writing about such issues as the Gouzenko spy case and the George Victor Spence affair. On the other hand the chapter on the 1970 FLQ crisis is disappointing in that it contains no information which is not readily available from newspapers. The reader should also be forewarned about Mr. Kelly's obvious bias when it comes to such controversial topics as the role of the force in the Winnipeg General Strike or the RCMP's treatment of Indians in the North.

If there is a theme to this book it is perhaps that the high reputation enjoyed by the RCMP, particularly in the Western Provinces, can be directly traced to the innumerable acts of individual courage by members of the old North West Mounted Police. The chapters on the Great March West and the Prairie Outposts are alone well worth the price. *Gary Levy*