

Quill and Quire (February, 1978)

GEORGE SIMPSON AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, Keith Wilson, The Book Society of Canada (Burns & MacEachern), \$2.95 paper ISBN 0 7725 5286 X, 58 pp., illus., October 1977

This book is intended to acquaint school children with the life of the Hudson's Bay Company's most famous Governor.

The slenderness of the volume, the abundance of photographs and the straightforward prose do not mean the book is simple or hastily conceived. In addition to basic biographical information, each chapter contains a number of questions which try to link information in the text with more contemporary concerns. For example, one question asks students to think back over the history of the Hudson's Bay Company and then list several roles women have played in its development. To further demonstrate that history is not simply the dull recitation of dates and places, the authors include supplemental material such as directions for weaving the kind of colourful sash worn by the voyageurs. There is also a poem by Al Purdy and the music for a traditional song of the voyageurs.

It is always difficult for adults to find ways to make history alive and relevant for young children. There has been a trend in recent years toward using audio-visual techniques and gimmicks. However, these can be overdone, and it is heartening to see the development of methods which are a compromise between the traditional and the more lively approaches to the teaching of Canadian history. *Gary Levy*