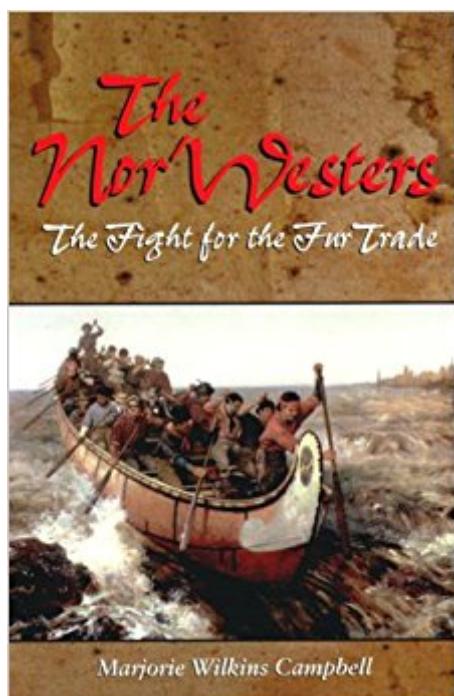


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The Nor'Westers: The Fight For The Fur Trade



Synopsis

For forty-two years, one group of brave men dominated the fur trade in Canada under the North West Company name. This is story of the company from its creation in 1779 to its union with the Hudson_s Bay Company in 1821. During this period, traders and explorers such as Alexander Henry, David Thompson, Simon McTavish, and Peter Pond explored territories previously unknown to those of European descent, made first contact with countless Native tribes, and risked their lives daily to meet the enormous European demand for beaver pelts. In this award-winning book, author Marjorie Wilkins Campbell captures the drama of the fur trade, following the lives of the Nor_Westers and the explorers and traders who braved the wilderness from the St. Lawrence river to the Pacific, from the Arctic to the Mississippi. Filled with adventure, intrigue, and excitement, The Nor_Westers brings the amazing story of the fur trade to life in vivid detail, awakening an interest in history in readers aged 12 to 16. The fur trade was a risky business. With few provisions, traders travelled by canoe and foot through the dangers of Canada_s northwest to find furs for a European market. As the demand for furs increased, the traders had to move farther and farther into the wilderness to find furs; they became explorers, heroes. But it was a hard life. Some years would be profitable, others would bring men and their families to the brink of starvation. In the face of such hardship, one group of traders joined forces in 1779. It was the beginning of an empire. For forty-two years they dominated the fur trade from the St. Lawrence to the Pacific, from the Arctic to the Mississippi. They called themselves the North West Company, and soon became known as the Nor_Westers.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr. 6-12. An award winner in Canada in 1954 and published now for the first time in the U.S., this history title holds up well and is still one of the only young adult resources detailing the rise and decline of Canada's fur trading empire of the nineteenth century. With an easy, conversational style, Campbell introduces many key figures in the rivalry between the North West Fur Trading Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, and she builds a compelling story of the infighting, treachery, and betrayal that turned one of the most lucrative businesses in North America into a financial and personal disaster. A separate chapter highlights the pivotal role played by Native American women, not only as wives or lovers of some head fur traders, but also as messengers of essential wilderness survival knowledge. A full-page black-and-white illustration opens each chapter, there's a useful map showing fur-trading routes, and the index will help readers keep track of the vast and varied cast of historical figures, who will be unfamiliar to most American teens. Roger

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Marjorie Wilkins Campbell (b at London, Eng 1901; d at Toronto 23 Nov 1986) was the author of thirteen books for both adults and younger readers, including *The Silent Song: A Tribute to a Reluctant Pioneer Mother* (Fifth House, 1999). She is a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship (1959) and a Member of the Order of Canada (1978), and received two Governor General's Awards; the first in nonfiction for *The Saskatchewan* (1950) and the second in juvenile literature for *The Nor'Westers* (1954).

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