

⁵Wilson Duff, Images Stone BC: Thirty Centuries of Northwest Coast Indian Sculpture (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975).

⁶Ted J. Brassier, "Bo'jou, Neejee!": Profiles of Canadian Indian Art (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1976), p. 23.

⁷Jean Blodgett, The Coming and Going of the Shaman: Eskimo Shamanism and Art (Winnipeg: The Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1978).

⁸Bernadette Driscoll, The Inuit Amautik: I Like My Hood to be Full (Winnipeg: The Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1980).

⁹Ruth B. Phillips, Patterns of Power (Kleinburg, Ontario: The McMichael Canadian Collection, 1985), p. 25.

¹⁰Dennis Reid and Joan Vastokas, From the Four Quarters: Native and European Art in Ontario 5000 BC to 1867 AD (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1984).

¹¹Elizabeth McLuhan and Tom Hill, Norval Morrisseau and the Emergence of the Image Makers (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1984), *passim*.

¹²Julia D. Harrison, Metis, People Between Two Worlds (Calgary: The Glenbow-Alberta Institute, 1985).

Victor P. Lytwyn: The Fur Trade of the Little North Indians, Peddlers, and Englishmen East of Lake Winnipeg, 1760-1821. Winnipeg: Rupert's Land Research Centre, University of Winnipeg, 1986.

This is a study of the fur trade in the area known to early Canadian fur traders as the Little North, or Le Petit Nord, as distinguished from the Grand North lying northwest of Lake Winnipeg. More precisely Lytwyn defines it to be the region between Lake Superior in the south and the Hudson Bay Lowlands in the north, and between Lake Winnipeg in the west and the divide between the Albany and Moose River systems in the east. Common economic interests and linkages distinguish it from surrounding areas. The time frame is the period of rivalry between the Hudson's Bay Company and Montreal traders which began in 1760 and terminated with the union of the Hudson's Bay Company and North West Company in 1821. Attention throughout focuses upon this rivalry and the shifting locations where it was

most intense. Consequently, this is not a study of the fur trade at a single trading post. Nor is it a study of the Indians, although some information is given on them. From the information on fur returns and their availability, however, it is possible to assess the degree of involvement of Indians and hence their dependence upon European goods. Rather, the study presents an overview of the history of developments over a sixty year period.

Most of the evidence upon which the study is based comes from the unpublished Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company. Having read most of these same materials some twenty years ago, I can say unhesitatingly that Lytwyn has done a superb job. With the skill of a detective and a much better understanding of the geography than I had, he has been able to pinpoint the location of numerous rivers, lakes and temporary trading posts many of which appeared to be impossible to locate. This is all the more remarkable considering the general ignorance of geography two centuries ago and the fact that present names of places are often different from the ones originally given them by the fur traders. To assist the reader, twenty seven maps (of the thirty-two figures in the text), some which are copies of originals made by fur traders, are included. Lytwyn illustrates his methods through a careful analysis of John Long's published journals which contain confusing and erroneous information. This example and numerous others throughout the study illustrate Lytwyn's method of using every available scrap of evidence to trace the location of trading posts. By using a variety of clues, such as travel time to and from places and accounts of voyages that describe geographic features and local landmarks, Lytwyn is able to follow the movements of traders to what were then perceived to be the most productive fur areas. As events are followed, the focus increasingly becomes the area just east of Lake Winnipeg. This was an extremely confusing area and it is remarkable that so many of these short-lived posts can be located at all. Nevertheless, despite the excellent sleuthing, areas once bypassed receive little farther attention. Thus, rivalry in the Lake Nipigon

area or near Osnaburgh are not mentioned once competing traders come to occupy the region further west.

Materials are presented in chronological order, beginning with a chapter that outlines the European fur trade from its origins to the fall of New France. Interesting tidbits are given such as, James Sutherland's late eighteenth-century account of the remains of a French post, dating to circa 1730 at Escabitchewan. After 1760 peddlers from Montreal quickly gained control of the fur trade in the Little North, ending the Hudson's Bay Company's short-lived monopoly. The Hudson's Bay Company was slow to respond partly because it lacked persons capable of settling inland. When figures such as George Sutherland make exploratory forays into the interior we gain some insight into their character. For instance, Sutherland exhibited humour in the face of extreme deprivation. By the late 1780s the Little North is dotted with competing trading stores belonging to either the newly formed North West Company or the Hudson's Bay Company. Thereafter, the rivalry intensifies and comes to include still a third group, the short-lived (1799-1804) XY Company. Key figures in the Hudson's Bay Company include James Sutherland, David Sanderson, John Best and Robert Goodwin, and in the North West Company the tough but gentlemanly little Scot, Duncan Cameron. By the end of the eighteenth century most productive fur areas had been searched out and occupied. It was at this time that rivalry was keenest. The final results of this desperate struggle were evident long before the union of the two great companies in 1821. As early as the 1790s traders were commenting that fur bearers, especially beaver and other game, had become scarce through overhunting in some regions. As time passed and as the last pockets of game were searched out and exploited, both companies were forced to tighten their belts by reducing costs. This usually meant reducing personnel and trading posts. The consequences for Indians were even graver. Lytwyn confirms with additional data what I have described occurred in the Osnaburgh House-Lac Seul area. The Indian population found it increasingly difficult to survive in an area depleted of key fur and game resources. Furs

had become the main means of obtaining trade goods that were not mere luxuries but basic necessities in meeting general subsistence needs. Life became especially difficult after 1821 when there was a major reduction in the number of posts and when new policies were introduced to improve the trade. The most colorful and turbulent period in the history of the fur trade was over: nothing like it would ever occur again. The "quiet years" had begun.

While important changes did take place gradually over the next century, the opinion of later writers unfamiliar with earlier events was that the Little North was a backwater, an area bypassed by the main thrust of the early fur trade. This is because most attention has been given to the more sensational exploratory trips that made Canada a British possession. This study makes it evident that the Little North had once been a hotly contested area, one that had undergone considerable change to which fur traders and Indians alike had been forced to accommodate. It is the accommodation that creates the illusion of isolation.

In addition to the maps and tables, two appendices are provided. The first lists the Hudson's Bay Company posts and their managers between 1760 and 1821, while the second provides a yearly itinerary of HBC fur returns at each post. It is unfortunate that comparable data do not exist for North West Company posts. Finally, Lytwyn has provided an excellent index which is especially useful in checking and cross-checking information.

In sum, this is an excellent account of the fur trade in a still poorly known area of Canada and at the same time a valuable reference source for those interested in focussing on a particular settlement.

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