



Simon Fraser: In Search of Modern British Columbia

Stephen Hume

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Winner of the 2009 BC Book Prizes' Roderick Haig-Brown Regional Prize

In 1808 seeking a navigable route to the western sea for the North West Company, Simon Fraser descended the great river that now bears his name. Most of us learn that much in school---but who was this blunt, tenacious man, and what drove him to make a dangerous journey halfway across an uncharted continent?

Journalist and poet Stephen Hume followed in Fraser's footsteps and canoe wake for four years. He studied fading maps and diaries in archives across North America, interviewed the descendants of people who aided Fraser and retraced Fraser's route across British Columbia's vast and varied landscape.

Hume found Fraser's own blazes and signs in the wild terrain that the Nor'wester crossed with the help of aboriginal peoples, all the way from the Rocky Mountains to the mouth of the ferocious river we call the Fraser. This is the story of diligent research and reconstruction of his route, the rigours of early nineteenth-century travel and the peoples and places he saw and recorded.

Simon Fraser: In Search of Modern British Columbia is the story of Fraser's great journey, but not solely from a historian's or biographer's pen. Hume writes with his usual lyrical power based in a profound knowledge of the landscape and history of BC.

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