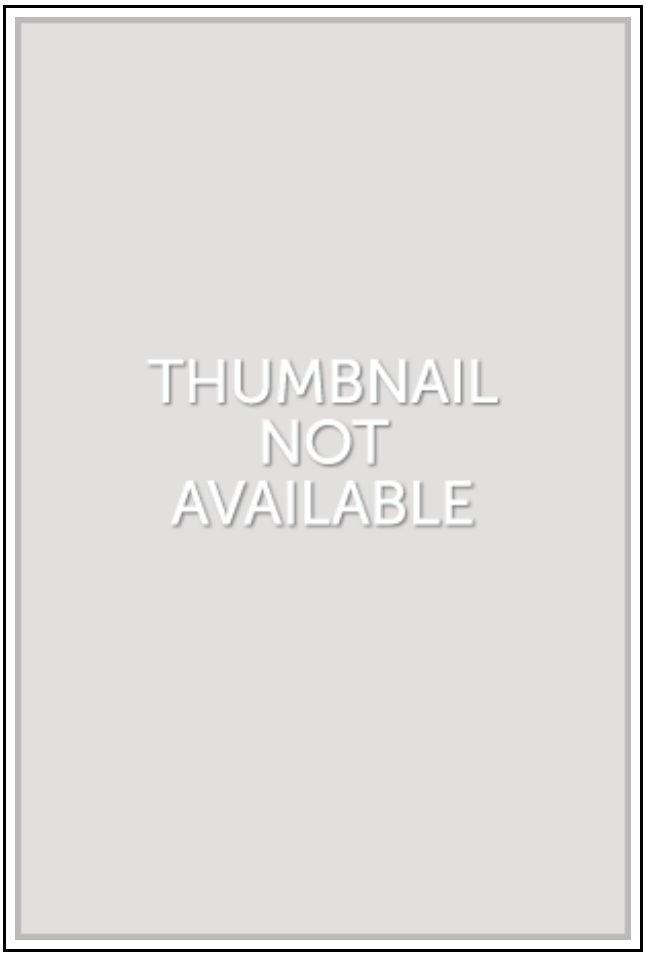
Fort St. James and New Caledonia: Where British Columbia Began



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Reviews

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Harbour Publishing. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Fort St. James and New Caledonia: Where British Columbia Began, Marie Elliott, As BC 150 celebrations have made us aware, modern British Columbia began in the central interior of the province, where Simon Fraser founded the fur trade empire known as New Caledonia. Today only the restored trading post of Fort St. James and the ancient trails remain. This is the first history of this crucial chapter in over one hundred years. Using unpublished Hudson's Bay Company archival material, Marie Elliott delivers rare glimpses into the lives and times of the first fur traders, weaving a tapestry of colourful characters including the great Carrier chief Kwah, Nor'westers John Stuart and James McDougall, as well as a surprisingly strong cast of women including Miyo Nipiy, Governor Simpson's country wife, Margaret Taylor and the tragic Elizabeth Pruden. Today, the trek from Stuart Lake to Fort Langley that took fur brigades a minimum of four weeks has been reduced to a scenic two-day drive; the three-day, perilous canoe journey from Fort St. James to Fort George can be completed on smooth highways in just a few hours. Elliott transports readers to a time when there was an ever-present threat of starvation, travel meant portaging rivers that rarely followed easy terrain and there were murderous consequences to the irascible, antagonistic relationship that existed between the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. Perhaps most poignantly, this book brings to life the difficulty of surviving the isolation of very long winters with prudently rationed rum, little if any company -- and very few books. Elliott fills in a record previously silent on the day-to-day activities of people and companies integral to British Columbia history, creating a readable and valuable addition to the literature of the province.

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