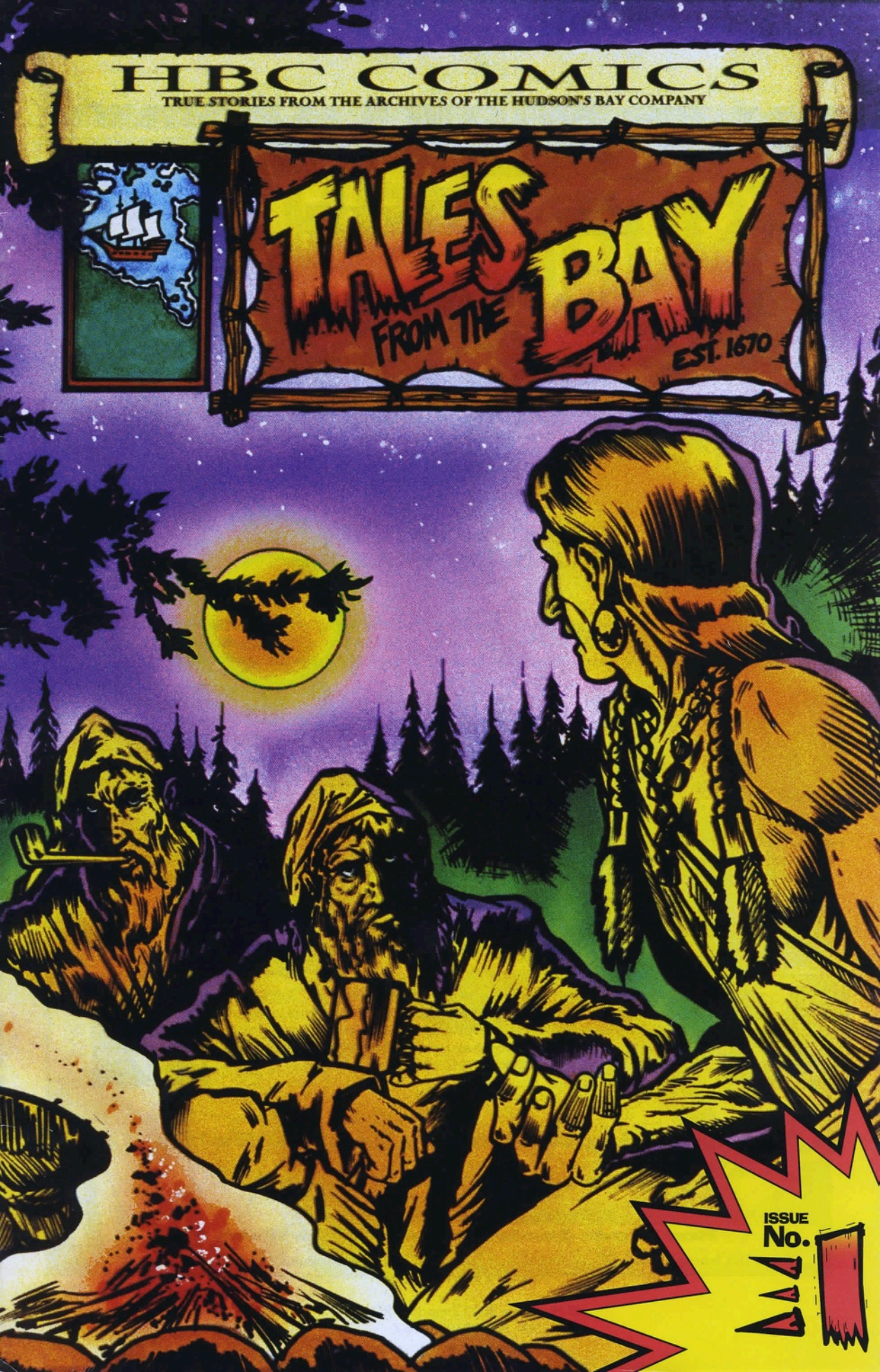
HBC COMICS
TRUE STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY
TALES FROM THE BAY
EST. 1670
ISSUE No. 1

TALES FROM THE BAY

True stories from the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company

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THANADELTHUR
A Quest for Peace
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Dan Milligan illustrated *Thanadelthur: A Quest for Peace.* Dan studied at the Ontario College of Art and now runs a commercial art studio in Toronto. Dan does a lot of work drawing storyboards for commercials and does print ad layouts for advertising agencies.

The Transit of
WILLIAM WALES
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Pamela Mingo wrote the original adaptation for, and illustrated *The Transit of William Wales.* She studied painting at the Banff School of Fine Arts and received her B.F.A. at York University. Pam also works in the film and television industry, designing sets and specialty props for TV shows such as Robocop.

The BIRCHBARK
EMPEROR
Page 21

Paul McCusker illustrated *The Birchbark Emperor, More Tales From the Bay,* and drew the artists' portraits. He is a graduate of Sheridan College's cartooning and illustration program, and has been freelancing for 20 years for books, comics, newspapers and children's TV. He now lives in Mississauga with his wife, two children and one man-eating guinea pig.

COVER by Jeff Norwell

Jeff Norwell created the cover art for *Tales from the Bay.* Jeff says he's been drawing since he could hold a pencil. He graduated from Sheridan College in 1987 and now draws for a large advertising agency in Toronto when he's not building and driving his 1932 and 1934 Hot Rods.

Story Adaptations by James Waley

Lettering by Ron Kasman

Editing & Art Direction
Ron Boyd + Jamie Piekarz + James Waley

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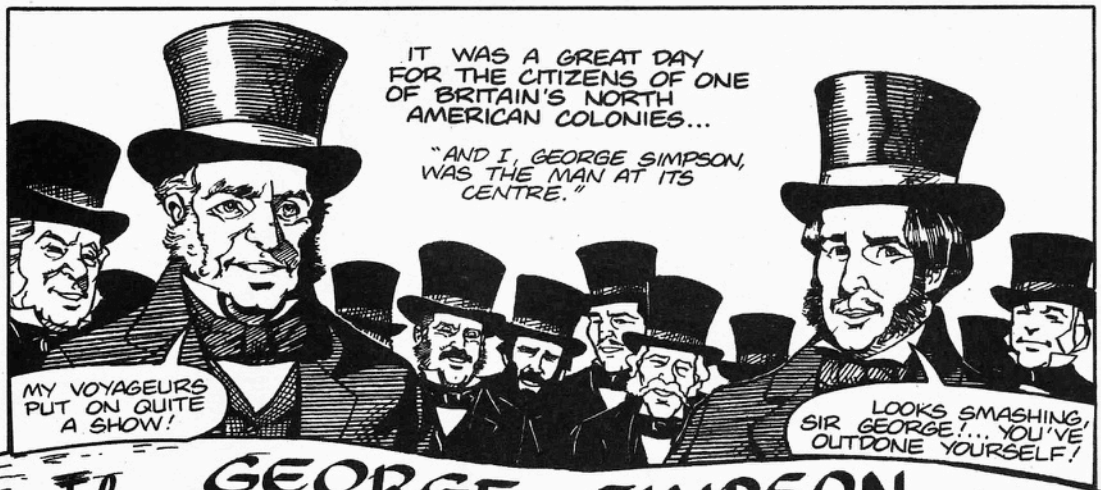
GEORGE SIMPSON, GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, ARRANGED A WELCOMING SHOW OF VOYAGEURS AND CANOES FOR THE VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

AUGUST 29th, 1860. LACHINE, NEAR MONTREAL



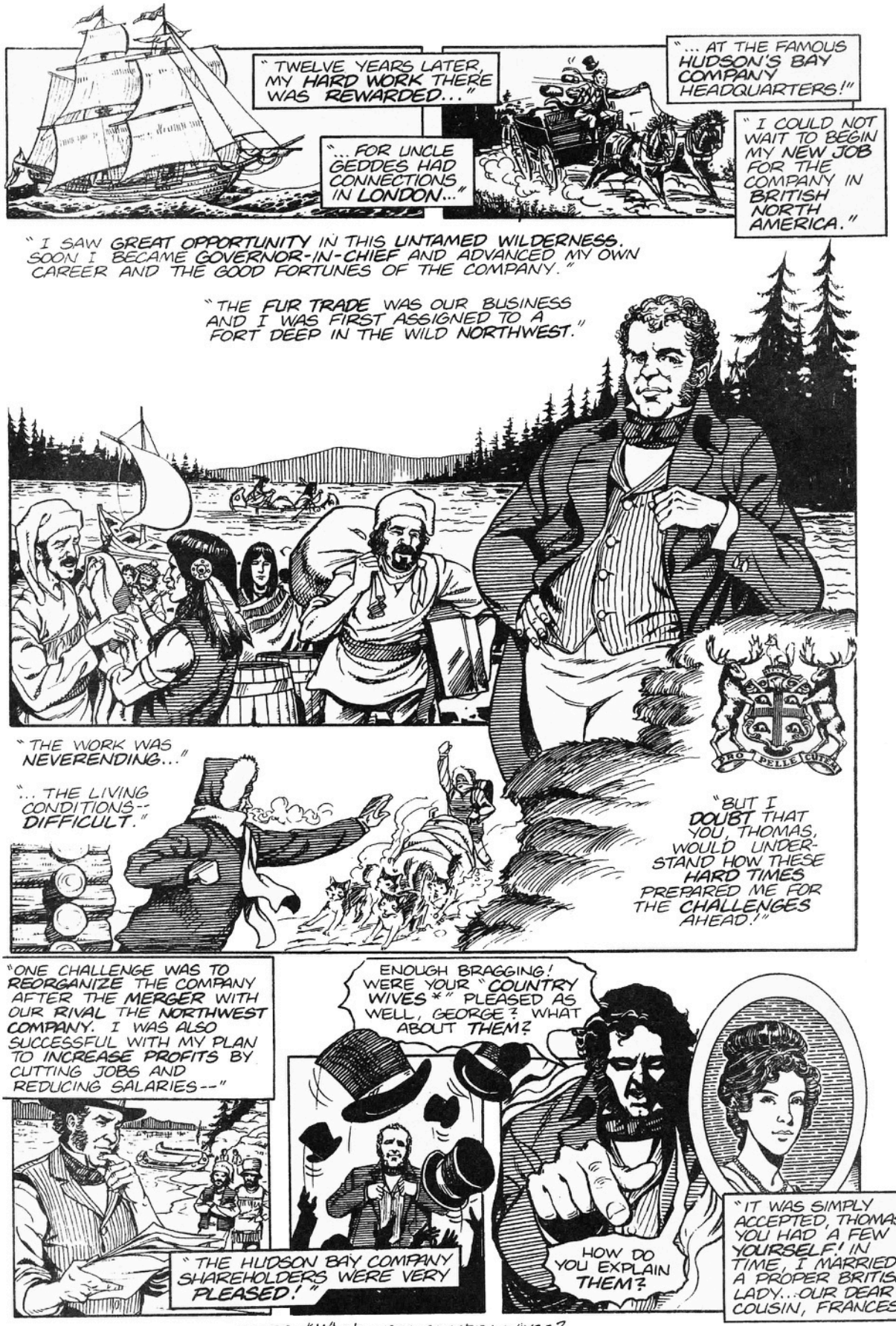
GEORGE SIMPSON
The BIRCHBARK EMPEROR

"I SWELLED WITH PRIDE AS VOYAGEUR SONGS FILLED THE AIR, WHILE THE CANOE FLOTILLA SAILED PAST THE PRINCE OF WALES AND MYSELF..."

JE M'EN IRAI JE VOUS LAISSERAI
O! QU'IL EST MAL AISÉ
JE M'EN IRAI AUX BOIS JOUER...

"I WAS QUITE HONOURED TO BE PART OF THE PRINCE OF WALES' NORTH AMERICAN TOUR."
WHAT A SPLENDID WELCOME, SIR GEORGE!
THE QUEEN SENDS HER GREETING AND ASKS ABOUT YOUR HEALTH!
ASSURE QUEEN VICTORIA I AM WELL AND FONDLY REMEMBER BEING KNIGHTED IN 1841...
"LATER AT THE BANQUET IN HIS HONOUR, THE PRINCE PRAISED MY NEARLY FORTY YEARS OF SERVICE AS GOVERNOR OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY..."
"IN RETURN, I TOASTED THE PRINCE'S HEALTH."
A TOAST TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH, SIR!
"STRANGE HOW ONLY DAYS LATER..."
"... MY OWN HEALTH TOOK A TURN FOR THE WORSE!"

"SOON I WAS SO SICK, THE DOCTORS COULD DO NOTHING FOR ME... I BEGAN TO HAVE FITS AND DREAMS!"
"I WAS LEFT ALONE TO REST..."
"... BUT I WAS NOT ALONE FOR LONG!"
oh, DOCTOR...
WHO?!? WHO DARES TO SET FOOT IN MY ROOM?!?!
IT IS I, YOUR COUSIN THOMAS! I HAVE RETURNED SO THAT YOU CAN JOIN ME!
BUT THOMAS?... YOU'RE DEAD! HOW CAN YOU... WHY?!?
WHY, DEAR GEORGE? BECAUSE YOU HAVE MUCH TO ACCOUNT FOR...
...AND VERY LITTLE TIME!
BECAUSE YOU HAD NO IDEA OF MY HARD LIFE OVER THE YEARS!
HARD LIFE?!... DON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT A HARD LIFE THOMAS!
IT WAS I WHO HAD THE HARD LIFE... FOR WAS I NOT AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD?... RAISED BY YOUR MOTHER?
"... BUT THANKS TO HER I RECEIVED SCHOOLING AND LATER, FROM UNCLE GEDDES..."
"... A GOOD JOB IN THE SUGAR BUSINESS."

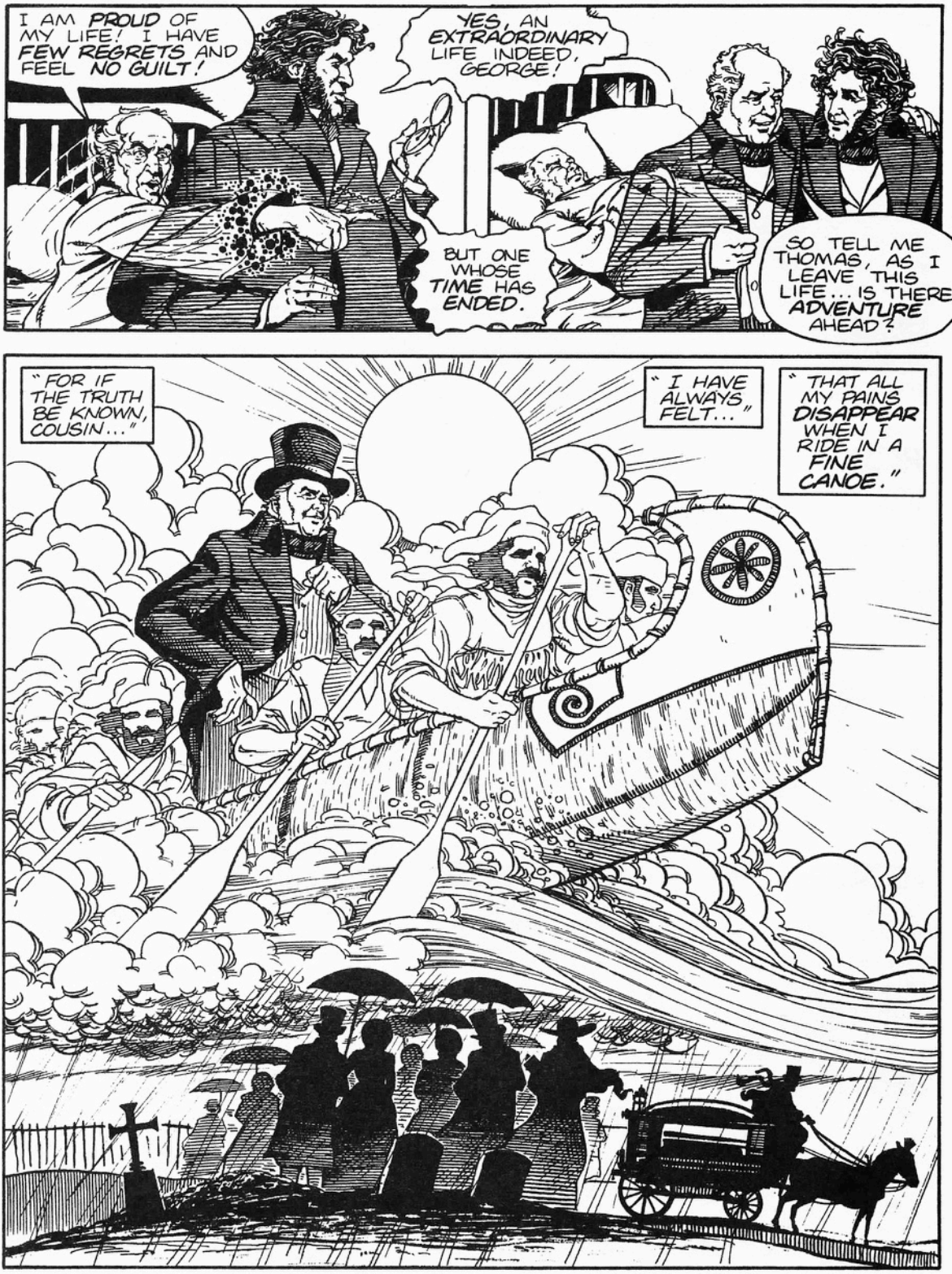


NOTE: *What were country wives?

AH YES, OUR DEAR COUSIN FRANCES. WHAT ABOUT FRANCES?
YOUR WELCOME TO HER IN THIS LAND WAS A "HONEYMOON TRIP"... A CROSS-COUNTRY JOURNEY AT BREAKNECK SPEED...
BUT THEN MANY HAVE SPOKEN OF THE WAY YOU TRAVELLED!
"HOW YOU WORKED YOUR VOYAGEURS..."
"...TO THE LIMIT..."
"... WAKING THEM BEFORE DAWN AND..."
"... DRIVING THEM 'TIL MANY COULD STAND NO MORE!*
NOTE: * When Simpson travelled by canoe, how could he tell if his voyageurs were slowing down?
THOMAS! I NEVER EXPECTED MORE OF OTHERS THAN I DID OF MYSELF!
MY JOURNEYS HAD TO BE SWIFT AND FREQUENT FOR I HAD A VAST TERRITORY TO OVERSEE.
GREAT SLAVE LAKE
LAKE ATHABASKA
FORT CHIPEWYAN
FORT ST. JAMES
FORT CARLTON
YORK FACTORY
NORWAY HOUSE
MOOSE FACTORY
FORT GARRY
FORT WILLIAM
LACHINE
BOSTON
NEW YORK
FRANCES KNEW THIS, YET STOOD BY ME!!

MY TRAVELS TOOK ME AROUND THE WORLD ON MISSIONS FOR ENGLAND AND THE QUEEN. I WAS GONE FOR MONTHS AT A TIME.
ONE SUCH TRIP TOOK ME TO RUSSIA TO SETTLE AN ALASKAN BORDER DISPUTE FOR THE COMPANY. THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE VERY DIFFICULT. HOWEVER, THERE WERE SOME GOOD TIMES.
"I PARTICULARLY ENJOYED THE RUSSIAN BALLET."
"I ALSO ENJOYED BEING IN HAWAII, TALKING WITH KING KAMEHAMEHA III ABOUT TRADE..."
"...AND INDEPENDENCE FOR THIS DELIGHTFUL ISLAND. IT WAS ALL PART OF MY JOB."
GEORGE! ALWAYS CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR JOB!... BUT WHAT ABOUT ME, YOUR COUSIN? AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR PRECIOUS KNIGHTHOOD?

THE KNIGHTHOOD YOU PROBABLY RECEIVED FOR AVERTING A RUSSIAN/BRITISH WAR...
THOUGH, IN FACT, THE REASON GIVEN WAS YOUR SUPPORT OF MY ARCTIC EXPEDITION.
"A KNIGHTHOOD THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN MINE!!!"
"MOST CERTAINLY THOMAS!... IF NOT FOR YOUR RATHER STRANGE... UNTIMELY... DEATH!"
"THOMAS, YOUR DEATH GRIEVED ME BUT I DID NOT LET IT INTERFERE WITH MY DUTIES TO THE COMPANY."
"I WORKED LONG AND HARD AND ACCOMPLISHED MUCH."
"EXPANDING THE ORIGINAL SIZE OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TERRITORY IN 1670..."
"...UNTIL IT COVERED ONE TWELFTH OF THE WORLD'S LAND!"



SIR GEORGE SIMPSON DIED ON SEPTEMBER 7th 1860--HIS OWN WORDS BEST DESCRIBE HIS LIFE... "*In February next, I shall have completed forty years service with the Hudson's Bay Company. During that very long period, I have never been off duty for a week at a time, nor have I ever allowed family ties and personal convenience to come in competition with the claims I consider the Company to have on me... It is high time, however, I rested from incessant labour. Moreover, I am unwilling to hold an appointment, when I cannot discharge its duties to my own satisfaction. I shall therefore make way for some younger man, who I trust may serve the company as zealously and conscientiously as I have done.*"

— George Simpson

The Birchbark Emperor

TIMELINE

THE STORY TAKES PLACE IN BRITAIN, RUPERT'S LAND, RUSSIA AND HAWAII

1860

THE STORY BEGINS WITH SIMPSON ILL AND NEAR DEATH AND FLASHES BACK THROUGH HIS LIFE.

c1787

GEORGE SIMPSON IS BORN (OUT OF WEDLOCK) IN SCOTLAND.

1809

HIS UNCLE GETS HIM A JOB AS CLERK IN GRAHAM, SIMPSON AND WEDDERBURN, LONDON.

1820

GEORGE SIMPSON BECOMES ONE OF TWO OVERSEAS GOVERNORS FOR THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

1821

SIMPSON MAKES THE FIRST OF 32 TRIPS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

1821

THE MERGER OF THE HUDSON'S BAY AND NORTH WEST COMPANIES. SIMPSON SETS OUT TO DOWNSIZE AND REORGANIZE THE COMPANY TO MAKE IT MORE PROFITABLE.

1830

SIMPSON GOES BACK TO ENGLAND AND MARRIES HIS COUSIN, FRANCES.

1838

SIMPSON TRAVELS TO ST. PETERSBURG AS AN EMISSARY OF QUEEN VICTORIA, TO SETTLE A BRITISH-RUSSIAN DISPUTE.

1841

SIMPSON IS KNIGHTED BY QUEEN VICTORIA

1860

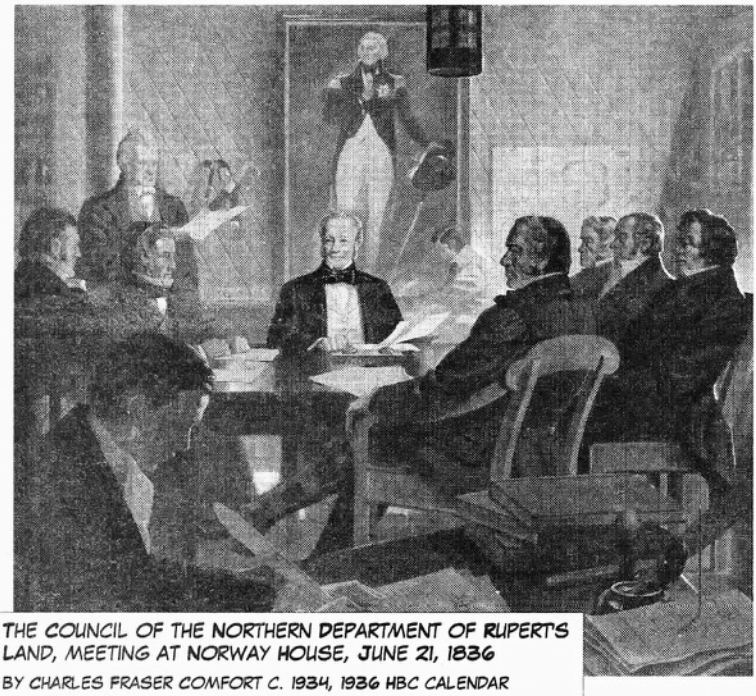
SUMMER

SIMPSON ENTERTAINS THE PRINCE OF WALES ON THE FIRST ROYAL TOUR OF CANADA. SIMPSON DIES.

SOME OF THE SOURCES THAT WERE USED BY THE HISTORIANS WHO RESEARCHED AND WROTE *THE BIRCHBARK EMPEROR*, ARE LISTED BELOW.

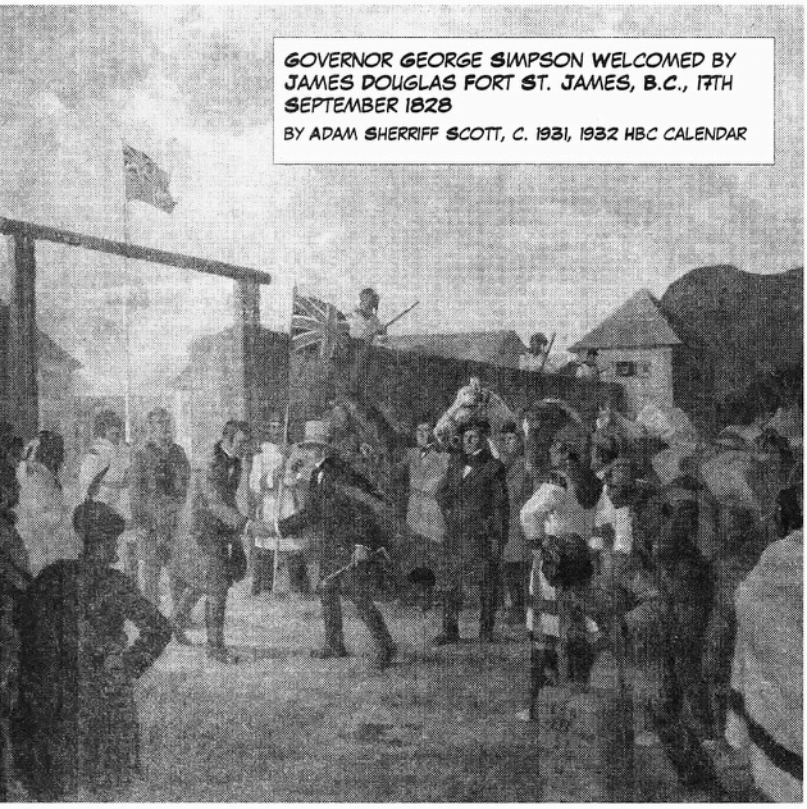
SIR GEORGE SIMPSON
BY STEPHEN PEARCE, 1857

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CORPORATE COLLECTION



THE COUNCIL OF THE NORTHERN DEPARTMENT OF RUPERT'S LAND, MEETING AT NORWAY HOUSE, JUNE 21, 1836
BY CHARLES FRASER COMFORT C. 1934, 1936 HBC CALENDAR

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CORPORATE COLLECTION



GOVERNOR GEORGE SIMPSON WELCOMED BY JAMES DOUGLAS FORT ST. JAMES, B.C., 17TH SEPTEMBER 1828
BY ADAM SHERRIFF SCOTT, C. 1931, 1932 HBC CALENDAR

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY CORPORATE COLLECTION

ARTICLE

GALBRAITH, JOHN S. "THE ENIGMA OF GEORGE SIMPSON." *THE BEAVER* 55 (1976): P. 4-9.

The Beaver
CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE