



A Perfect Eden : Encounters by Early Explorers of Vancouver Island

Michael Layland



In 1842, when famed world explorer James Douglas first encountered the rugged natural paradise that would become Vancouver Island, he described it as A perfect Eden. He was just one among many European explorers to experience the intense beauty of the Pacific Northwest, most of whom have left fascinating accounts of their encounters with the terrain and the peoples they found, their exploration and settlement of the land there. Interspersed with maps, illustrations, paintings, and photographs, these first-hand accounts create a captivating tale of discovery and exploration. Starting from before the first known European arrivals, the stories feature Spanish and British naval officers, traders seeking sea otter pelts, colonial surveyors, Indian chiefs, soldiers, settlers and adventurers, and end in 1858, when Douglas, by then Sir James, retired as governor of the two colonies -- Vancouver Island and British Columbia. The companion book to Michael Laylands prizewinning *The Land of Hearts Delight: Early Maps and Charts of Vancouver Island*, which traces the cartographic history of this remarkable region, *A Perfect Eden* paints a vivid picture of what the explorers saw, the people they met, the hazards they faced, and some mysteries, as yet unsolved.

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