

B.C. histories fetch big bucks Prices for books range from \$975 to \$4,250

Katherine Dedyne
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Books about B.C. go back a long way, fascinate serious collectors and fetch some big bucks.

To celebrate B.C.'s 150th birthday, Victoria-based online bookseller AbeBooks has compiled the top 10 most expensive books about the province sold through its website of 13,500 dealers. Many of the volumes are in the voices of some of the world's greatest explorers as they made their way around what is now B.C.

"There are lots of really neat books about British Columbia," AbeBooks.com spokesman Scott Laming says. "We're just a really bookish province -- especially in Victoria."

1 David Thompson's *Narrative of Explorations in Western America, 1784-1812* is described as "one of the world's great travel books," by the Parks Canada website. North America's most prolific mapmaker, Thompson covered 90,000 kilometres and crossed the Rockies going west in 1807. Only 550 copies of his book were printed by the Champlain Society in 1916; this one sold for \$4,250 US.

2 *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages* by Captain James Cook, edited by J.C. Beaglehole, \$1,750

First edition of the 1955 printing of journal entries by Cook and his officers on three voyages, including the exploration of coastal B.C.

3 *The Art of Emily Carr* by Doris Shadbolt, \$1,500.

One of only 250 copies numbered, signed and bound in leather, it contains reproductions of the Victoria artist's work.

4 *British Columbia Historical Quarterly* by various authors, \$1,351

Includes complete quarterly reports from 1937 to 1956 and photos of major historical figures.

5 *Voyages From Montreal, on the River St. Lawrence, through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans; in the years 1789 and 1793* by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, \$1,250.

The great explorer records the first transcontinental exploration from the St. Lawrence River to the Pacific.

6 *Miscellanies* by Barrington Daines, \$1,250

Includes a significant account of the Spanish voyage up North America's Pacific coast by Captain Don Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra in 1775.

7 *The Art of Captain Cook's Voyages* by Rüdiger Joppien and Bernard Smith, \$1,221.

Four volumes published in 1985 that include the work of the artists who went along on each of Cook's voyages.

8 Spanish Explorations in the Strait of Juan de Fuca by Henry R. Wagner, \$975.

Before Capt. George Vancouver there were expeditions by Quimper (1790), Eliza (1791), and Galiano and Valdes (1792). This is a signed presentation copy, one of only 425 copies printed.

9 A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean by Captain George Vancouver, \$850.

A three-volume set of the explorations of Capt. George Vancouver in his own words.

10 The Wilderness of the North Pacific Coast Islands by Charles Sheldon, \$750.

A hunter's eye view of the land on larger B.C. islands signed by the author of this 1912 first edition.

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