



# John Muir

*Daryl Ashby*

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## **John Muir** Daryl Ashby

This historical biography—based on the life of British Columbia pioneer John Muir—tells the amazing story of a family from Scotland who came out to Canada in the late 1840s to work as "consignee" labourers for the Hudson's Bay Company. Ashby recreates the story of the Muirs' struggle to develop a place for themselves in the hierarchic colony ruled by James Douglas. With their vision of a country based on democratic principles, the Muirs fought to bring a new way of life to the West Coast. Drawing on the Muir family diaries, Ashby recounts the family's voyage from Scotland, their first years of toil in the coal mines near Fort Rupert on northern Vancouver Island, and their challenge to the Company when they initiated what may have been the first strike in Canada. Muir went on to become a magistrate with his own sense of justice for the working man, and later a Member of the first Legislative Assembly. So fascinating is Muir's personality and so intriguing is his struggle for a democratic way of life that his life's story reads at times like a novel. Ashby is to be commended for vividly bringing back to life this historic figure, a man who deserves to be better known in his own right and for his contribution to the development of the West.

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