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I Fiddle Music on Cassettes Paul Cranford of St. Paul's Island has reprinted two important books of fiddle tunes (The Skye Col? lection and The Simon Fraser Collection, both re? viewed in Cape Breton's Magazine, Issue 32). It is Paul's goal to see the tunes known, played, and in all respects kept alive in Cape Breton. He knows this doesn't happen by wishing. His life off St. Paul's (where he is lighthouse keeper) is spent travelling • learning and sharing the music. And now he has put together a pair of cassettes to "make the Fraser collection more accessible to peo? ple who generally rely on their ears to develop their repertoire. Although some of the tunes have been played by traditional players on the island, the majority of the melodies will be new." The two tapes include a total of 112 tunes, played by 20 Cape Breton musicians, including Alex Fran-

Book Reviews: Micmac Quillwork Quillwork offers us a "reading" of the history of Micmac-European contact, and allows us a hint of what the pre-contact world of the Micmac Indian might have been like. And it helps us document the loss of human diversity. In the 17th century there were five distinct methods of working porcupine quills into personal Micmac articles; by the 20th century only one of those methods had survived, and that survival was due to the interest in quill? work as Souvenir Art. The desire to be profitable meant both producing items the alien culture wanted, and using the fastest (thus most economi? cal) techniques. This is not to say that the qual? ity of the work always deteriorated, or that de? sign motifs of old times were given up. In Micmac Quillwork, Ruth Holmes Whitehead has clearly estab? lished by word and photograph the excellence of quill craftsmanship and the artistry of the women. She has revealed to us the lasting quality and the changes in particular design motifs, although she warns us against thinking we know for sure what any of these motifs meant in pre-contact times. Ms. Whitehead has done a wonderfully delicate job with something so apparently silent as a quilled artifact. She's tough enough when she feels she's on the right track (as when she is arguing for Mic? mac originality), but quick to suggest tentative- ness when she feels the thread of information thin? ning or going bare. Back and forth, along the thread of one motif and then another, she compares what she has found from a study of over 3000 quilled items in Europe and North America, with other forms of Micmac expression (tales and rock carvings and the language itself), and with what contemporary Europeans wrote • searching for what is Micmac, what the motifs mean, and what the changes portend. Micmac Quillwork is a lovely production from the Nova Scotia Museum. Over 500 illustrations, many of them in colour, show placemats, boxes, cradles, and so forth, as well as close-up details of the elements of design. The beautiful items shown are made from bark and porcupine quills and black spruce roots and dyes. The book makes for good reading and a quiet evening simply turning the pages • a pleasure to see. The book is a bargain at \$18.50 and is certainly one of the loveliest local productions in years. It is not a how-to manual • we do not see people actually doing quillwork • but it serves more as a search and a homage, and an en? couragement to future work. It is a generous selec? tion and one worth owning.



MICMAC QUILLWORK, MICMAC INDIAN TECHNIQUES OF POR? CUPINE QUILL DECORATION; 1600-1950 by Ruth Holmes Whitehead. A publication of the Nova Scotia Museum, available from the Nova Scotia Government Book? store, 1597 Hollis Street, Box 637, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2T3. cis MacKay, Carl MacKenzie, Gordon Cote, Jerry Hol? land. The narration is by Paul Cranford. The tapes are an excellent learning tool, but can stand up as good listening as well. MUSIC FROM THE SIMON FRASER COLLECTION, Vol. I and Vol. II, are \$9.95 for the pair. Add 750 for post? age and handling. THE SIMON FRASER COLLECTION book is \$19.95 hard/\$12.95 paper, postpaid. THE SKYE COLLECTION is \$14.95 postpaid. Order from Paul Cranford, Box 1654, Sydney, N. S. BIP 6T7. (40)