



## THE BOOK REVIEW

by Richard P. Snyder

**THE PERSONAL HISTORY, ADVENTURES, EXPERIENCES & OBSERVATIONS OF PETER LEROY: A Serial Novel of which this is Volume 2, Number 2, The Girl With The White Fur Muff by Eric Kraft: Apple-wood Books, Box 2870, Cambridge, MA 02139; \$4.95; 95pp.**

The folks at Apple-wood Books believe that in *The Personal History, Adventures, Experiences & Observations of Peter Leroy*, a serial novel by Eric Kraft, that they have a unique work done in an innovative format. I agree wholeheartedly. The author is that rare individual who can view the adult world, of which he is necessarily a part, through a child's eyes. And that child is part Howdy Doody, part Woody Allen, and part you and me.

I must admit to apprehension when I received this book with the words Volume 2, Number 2 emblazoned across the cover, being of that ilk which cannot stand to start

anything in the middle. However, there is an irresistably cute little girl standing bravely out in a frosty winter day in an elementary school parking lot in front of a Packard and a Studebaker on the front of the book. She convinced me that I would be transported back to a time when things were simpler and more fun. I remembered a girl that looked just like her back in fourth grade that I used to walk home from school on gray days when the sidewalks were wet and lawns and roofs were white and we could see our breaths.

But to return to Peter Leroy; he is a fourth-grader, newly-promoted into the class. The plot revolves around the teacher, Mrs. Graham, trying to make sure that Peter really gets to know his classmates. She asks him if he would like to direct *King Lear*, the fourth-grade production. "It's a play," she said. "I had been an elf in a Christmas pageant, and I knew that a play was something along the same lines . . ." The fun for the reader begins in earnest as the kids learn that Peter has to cast the play as well as direct it. Of course, all the girls want to be Cordelia.

Eric Kraft provides a wonderful comic insight into a special world that we all wish we could inhabit again. We can't, but through the author's magic we can at least visit.