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100 Jahre. 1973. *100 Jahre Franz Josefs-Land. Zur Erinnerung an d. Entdeckungsreise d. Österreichisch-Ungarischen Nordpol-Espedition 1872–1874 unter Julius von Payer und Carl Weyprecht. Ausstellung im Prunksaal der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Katalog*. Wien: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (Biblos-Schriften 75).

**LANDS THAT HOLD ONE SPELLBOUND.** Spencer Apollonio. 2008. Calgary: University of Calgary Press. xx + 332 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 978-1-55238-240-0. C\$ 34.95.

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This is a smallish format softback production; the only English language account specifically dealing with the history (story might be a better word, as the author suggests) of east Greenland. It is an account of this huge and sparsely populated area written for the general reader, but could also be useful as a starting point for more serious study, since it is indexed and has a short bibliography.

The author makes it clear from the outset that he has not attempted an exhaustive study of his subject and that he has little personal first hand knowledge of east Greenland. Nevertheless, he has achieved a useful and interesting account of some of the published material on the region.

The introduction is a hugely over-simplified geographical summary of such a large area and does not follow the conventional subdivisions. Very early settlement is described briefly and the summary of early European activities is useful, in which published information is scanty and hard to come by.

Nineteenth century European exploration from Scoresby onwards is given much more detailed treatment, together with Danish exploratory ventures. Pioneering expeditions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are well covered, with many passages of quotation from a range of published sources. Expeditions such as Amtrup's pioneering voyages down the difficult and dangerous Blossville Kyst and Mylius-Erichsen's ill-fated explorations are recounted at some length, together with some of the early over-wintering experiences and problems. Perhaps surprisingly for a north American book, Peary's and, later, Louise Boyd's ventures are not given prominence.

The completion of the 'ring' of exploration around northern Greenland is covered, followed by the early attempts at social engineering by Einar Mikkelsen and others, based, one might say, on the results of the early exploratory expeditions. Although there is relatively little study in the book about Inuit matters of this era after World War I, expeditions at that time became more numerous and more intensively scientific, and these are covered at some length. The sovereignty issue is also covered but not discussed in any depth.

World War II in East Greenland is summarised, with some of its strange events, but the post war period is only scantily touched on, with emphasis mainly on Egil Knuth and the British north Greenland expedition. The development of aviation and its importance to east Greenland, the formation of the national park, the Sirius Patrol and most recently the development of arctic tourism are given scant or non-existent coverage.

The main strength of this book thus seems to lie in its quite detailed descriptive summary of expedition activity in east Greenland from the early nineteenth to the mid twentieth century, loosely set in a geographical and historical context but without much in the way of analysis.

Being a north American production, the sterling price is not cheap and the standard of production is, in this reviewer's opinion, not altogether commensurate with the price. The illustrations are in black and white and are poorly printed on the same weight and quality of paper as the text. Even modern images are poorly reproduced and text shows through them from the reverse side of the page. (D.W. Matthews, Drummore of Cantray, Cawdor, Nairn IV12 5XY).

**MEN OF ICE: THE LIVES OF ALISTAIR FORBES MACKAY (1878–1914) AND CECIL HENRY MEARES (1877–1937).** Leif Mills. 2008. Whitby: Caedmon of Whitby. ISBN 978-0-905355-69-6. £20.00  
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With biographies of most Antarctic expedition leaders now largely available (although there is still a gap for an English biography of Otto Nordenskjöld), the time of the Men appears to have arrived. Books by Thomson (1977) and Quartermain (1981) have covered at least briefly many of the participants in both the Scott and Shackleton expeditions, but more extended accounts are now appearing. Leif Mills (1999) produced a biography of Frank Wild some years ago, and he has now returned to examine some less well-known men of the Heroic Age. Here he has chosen Alistair Forbes Mackay – who went south with Ernest Shackleton on the *Nimrod* expedition in 1907 and later north with Stefansson on the ill-fated Canadian Arctic Expedition aboard *Karluk* – and Cecil Meares, chosen to go south with Robert Falcon Scott on *Terra Nova*. He does not explain why he chose these two rather than others on the Scott and Shackleton expeditions.

The two were very different men, but both had interesting lives outside the polar expeditions. There is only a limited amount of original material in the form of letters or diaries (which have been used by other polar authors previously), so Mills has had to work mainly from secondary sources.

Mackay was a doctor who originally interrupted his medical studies at Edinburgh to fight in the Boer War. It was on his return he signed up for the Antarctic. Using Mackay's sledging diaries, Mills tells about the epic

trip to the South Magnetic Pole with Douglas Mawson and T.W. Edgeworth David, and in so doing provides a very different account of relationships between the three men than is recounted elsewhere. David was clearly seen by Mackay as unfit to lead the party, and at one point Mackay threatened to certify him insane to allow Mawson to take over. As Mills attempts to flesh out the character of Mackay, it becomes clear that he was not one of Shackleton's best choices. His experiences and the comments of others suggest he was not an ideal expedition man, and his later period in the Arctic on the *Karluk* substantiated this. He was not a man to make friends and his persistent alcoholism, before during and after the expedition significantly damaged his health, making him less able to withstand the rigours of the Arctic. He died in a badly organised attempt to reach Wrangel Island after *Karluk* went down.

Meares was a very different case. His family were fairly wealthy, which allowed him to travel extensively, ending up in India as a coffee planter. From there he also went to fight in the Boer War in 1901. After this he went fur trading in Siberia and then across to the US before going to China. Here he became involved in the Russo-Japanese War, possibly spying for the British, and travelled into Tibet. It was in China that he met Herbert Ponting and read about Scott's *Discovery* expedition. Inspired to go south, he applied to Scott for a place and was selected as the dog man on the basis of his sledging in Siberia. Sent by Scott on his own to Siberia to choose the dogs and the ponies (of which he had no experience) and ship them to New Zealand, the seeds of disaster were sown early. Meares became especially friendly with L.E.G. Oates, but appears to have got on well with everyone. His opinion of Scott fell steadily, as he believed Scott was too sentimental over the animals and he decided to leave after the first winter and went back to Britain. Joining the Army and serving later in the Royal Naval Air Service and then the RAF, he survived the First World War. After the war he spent time in Japan, and then finally settled with his wife in British Columbia.

Mills raises the question of what might have happened if Meares had stayed a second winter and been available to drive the dogs. Would Scott's party have had a better chance of surviving? Like the question on what might have happened with one less in the Polar Party, this is impossible to answer, but it is clear from Mills' account that Meares acquitted himself well during his time there.

Whilst much of the material in this volume is culled from other Antarctic books, Mills has provided a much more detailed account of the life of Meares than we have had before, using his magazine articles about his non-polar travels as well as letters to his wife as new sources. In particular, he answers some of the questions raised in Thomson's book and adds considerably to the sporadic references to Meares in many other expedition accounts. There is less new material on Mackay, but bringing what we know together does provide a much better portrait of the man. Many Antarctic readers may not know about

the later Arctic activities of Mackay, and for them that material will be a useful insight into his troubled life and death.

I have some criticisms of the volume. Port Lyttelton is not at the bottom of South Island, there are some copy-reading errors, and in some chapters a mixture of present and past tenses in the narrative. I was especially irritated by the way in which Mills cited his references. For example, we have to assume that Mackay's early diary on the trip to the South Magnetic Pole is in the archives of the Royal Scottish Museum, since Mills suggests they published it in Edinburgh, but he gives no details. A transcript was in fact included in a publication authored by Joy Pitman (details below). In some cases Mills cites a complete reference to a paper in brackets in the text (where he is referring, for example, to articles by Meares on his Tibetan travels), in other cases he uses a very strange system of capital letters to reference statements and quotations in the text, with what he calls 'Reference Notes' at the end of each part of the book to explain what each of these abbreviations refers to. However, these notes are a mixture of places and published books, which I found thoroughly confusing. This unusual approach to references is further extended in the bibliography, where books are listed by their title rather than by author. It is not clear if the bibliography is a list of all the works consulted or those plus others that are relevant to the stories of the two men. The use of a standard system of footnotes or a normal reference citation system by chapter as Huntford and others have used would have made the book easier for the reader to see his sources. In the bibliography, I wondered why neither of the two biographical accounts of Edgeworth David were included, especially since he appears to be heavily criticised in Mackay's diary. Equally strange is the lack of a listing for the book *Aurora Australis* in the bibliography, which has been published in two limited edition facsimiles and two trade editions and features in the text. There is a glossary but no index.

The book adds materially to what is currently available on the lives of these two men and is produced in a workmanlike edition with halftones of each of them. It could have been improved with little extra effort. The book is available direct from Caedmon of Whitby, 128 Uppang Lane, Whitby, Yorkshire YO21 3JJ at £20 post free. (David W.H. Walton, British Antarctic Survey, High Cross, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0ET.)

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