

understandably, have been more attracted to his rumbustious uncle Sir John. It has fallen to his great grandson, Rear-Admiral M. J. Ross, to redress in part the balance with this new account of Ross's Antarctic voyages of 1839–43. It could be argued that, in his own *Voyage of discovery and research*, published in 1847 and reprinted as recently as 1969, Sir James Ross had himself pronounced the last word. Unfortunately James, when he finally came to put pen to paper on his return from the far south, was an utterly exhausted man. His prose is rather Victorian and pompous; though valuable for research, few would read it for sheer enjoyment. Admiral Ross's retelling of the story is altogether more compelling. As a result of much original research he has succeeded in highlighting the principal events of this voyage with reference to contemporary correspondence, some from his family's own archives, and from narratives of Ross's shipmates. These include not only those close to Ross—McCormick and Hooker for example—but such lesser luminaries as Cornelius Sullivan, blacksmith on *Erebus*, and John D. Davis, second master of *Terror* whose *Letter from the Antarctic* was subsequently privately printed. Several of Davis's charming vignettes have been employed by Admiral Ross to embellish the chapter headings of this book. Each of these diarists reacts typically to nature's sublimest revelations as displayed in the smoking volcano Erebus and the awesome cliffs of the Great Ice Barrier. Perhaps more topical are their reactions to an unwelcome wintering in the Falklands Islands—'this vile place' as Ross described them.

As to Ross the man, perhaps we catch the more perceptive glimpses through Hooker's correspondence with his father Sir William Hooker and his own Antarctic journal. In his old age Hooker criticized the expedition saying (to Captain Scott) that 'science was starved on board'. He faulted Ross for failing to involve his naval officers in scientific pursuits, thus prejudicing not only morale but the very success of the expedition. Such grievances, as M. J. Ross stresses, are understandable on a protracted and demanding voyage. But a commander's chief concern must be for the safety of his ships, and to ensure this routine observations and maintenance had to take priority. In the event, as a chapter devoted to results clearly shows, the scientific work was often first rate and forms the basis of much of our present-day knowledge of the region. Hooker's magnificent *Flora Antarctica*, Sabine's report on magnetic data, Richardson's and Gray's work on fish, seals and birds were all of the first order of magnitude. Only Ross's own painstaking collections of marine biology came to naught, ending up in a pile of broken glass bottles on a garden rubbish dump, sad evidence of the mental decline of his final years.

Admiral Ross is to be congratulated on a scholarly and objective account of his illustrious ancestor. He shows a scrupulous regard for the facts, and his account is throughout illuminated by his own professional association with the sea and with his enthusiasm as an amateur botanist for the work of Hooker. A single reference to Weddell (p 23) where he is associated with Enderby & Sons is incorrect; Weddell was in the employ of Messrs Asquith. Congratulations must also be extended to the publishers, to whom polar historians must ever be indebted.

HUNTERS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

[Review by Ian Whitaker* of Hugh Brody's *Maps and dreams; Indians and the British Columbia frontier*. Vancouver, Douglas and McIntyre, 1981; London, Jill Norman and Hobhouse, 1982. 297 p, illus, £7.95.]

Hugh Brody has written a fine book, which I believe will have a wide appeal. Following his work for the Inuit, especially relating to land-use, and his term as an adviser to Mr Justice Thomas R. Berger and the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, he here addresses the problems facing a group of Indian hunters in northern British Columbia. These northern Athapaskan-speakers are generally called 'Beaver Indians'; he first met them in 1978, and he was followed into the field by a team commissioned by the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. We have here the results of two-and-a-half years' work. It is not, however, a conventional anthropological monograph. Although we are led through a year in the life of a forest hunter, this is counterpointed by alternate chapters which treat their problems more analytically.

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The result is a sensitive document which has many of the characteristics of a literary masterpiece. Anyone who knows Brody's earlier book, *The people's land* (1975) will not expect a neutral work of social science, which this book certainly is not. It is a skilful piece of advocacy, for a people whose culture is threatened through the contact with modern industrialism. Brody believes that this total transformation might be avoided. In pressing for this, he presents us with an engaging picture of the tough life that hunters lead, so that we may realize what is at stake. But he takes us further—into the world of their aspirations, and ultimately into their dream world.

As I have indicated it is not orthodox ethnography, yet there is nonetheless meticulous detail on such matters as hunting routes and routines. It is clear from the above I have a major difficulty in categorizing the book; I have none in assessing its quality and it value to all who wish to be informed about the contemporary situation in the Canadian sub-Arctic. Brody has the ability to bring to both the informed reader and the neophyte the desire to participate in his view of this complex social situation. We may not all agree with his judgements on the fur trade, but that is perhaps beside the point. For once we have an opportunity of hearing the views of his informants quite directly.

If I have any criticism it relates to the lack of illustrations, and perhaps the occasional dislocation that his pattern of alternate chapters of narrative and analysis sometimes involves.

INFANT MORTALITY IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

[Review by S. R. S. Haraldson* of *The report of the Northwest Territories perinatal and infant mortality and morbidity study* prepared by D. W. Spady. Occasional Paper 16, Boreal Institute for Northern Studies. Edmonton, University of Alberta, 1982, 305 p, softcover.]

This important study arose from the high infant mortality rates recorded in Canada's Northwest Territories, particularly among non-white populations. As recently as 1970 mortality in Inuit infants was 105 per thousand live births, roughly twice that of Indians, five times that of local white infants and seven times the rate for Canada as a whole. The year-long research here presented, based on 1 191 infants, was the work of a multidisciplinary team of some 50 experienced Arctic doctors, sociologists, educators and administrators, investigating a wide range of health, social and environmental factors. The objectives of the study were to identify causes of illness and death and the socio-economic, nutritional and other risk factors involved, to assess adequacy of infant care, and to recommend remedies for the high morbidity and mortality.

The study took place in 1973–74 when the total population of the Territories was 36 000 (approximately 13 000 Inuit, 10 000 Indians and the balance whites), typically living in small, widely-scattered settlements. The health services were staffed by 42 physicians, 11 dentists and 150 nurses and nursing assistants, and organized through five fully-staffed hospitals, nine health centres (staffed by public health nurses), 38 nursing stations (nurses, midwives, X-ray facilities) in settlements of up to 1 000 people, and six health stations (lay dispensers with treatment manuals) for settlements of fewer than 100. Data were gathered from a wide area, despite difficulties arising from harsh climate, language barriers, inaccurately-compiled birth and death certificates, and the mobility of much of the population.

The findings of the study were not surprising; infant morbidity and mortality in the Northwest Territories depend on socio-economic and environmental circumstances, much as they do in the tropics and elsewhere. Health care is only one of several factors determining the health status of infants. Hardships directly imposed by polar conditions were found to be of little significance; what mattered was the poverty of Arctic peoples in transition from old ways of life to new.

Handicapped at the outset by their socio-economic environment, native infants were most at risk. Compared with white infants, Inuit had three times as many cases of illness during their first year and Indians twice as many. Commonest were respiratory and gastro-intestinal complaints, and otitis media (which affected 63 per cent of Inuit infants). Meningitis too was prevalent. The high incidence of otitis

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