

## Book Reviews

**THE NORTHERN NORTH ATLANTIC: A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT.** Priska Schäfer, Will Ritzrau, Michael Schlüter, and Jörn Thiede (Editors). 2001. Berlin, Heidelberg, and New York: Springer-Verlag. viii + 500 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 3-540-67231-1. £110.00; US\$149.00. DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403213188

This is a daunting, information-packed book that gives a highly detailed picture of the latest research on the palaeoceanography of the Norwegian and Greenland seas and their modern role in ocean climate change. As the editors state in the preface, 'The northern North Atlantic is the key region in the modern global thermohaline circulation system of the ocean.' To explore the role of these seas, and their influence on the changing European climate, the German Science Foundation (Sonderforschungsbereich or SFB) was enlightened enough to fund a long-term interdisciplinary research project — SFB313, entitled 'Global environmental change: the northern North Atlantic' — which lasted from 1985 to 1998. Not only were considerable direct funds made available to German research groups on a long-term basis, allowing such luxuries as systematic programmes of research cruises, but also the programme stimulated co-funding from other sources (for example, the European Union), so that its beneficial effects extended far beyond the direct spending and far beyond the borders of Germany. One wishes that the research councils of other European nations could take a similar long-term approach to supporting such important areas of climate science.

The book represents a report on the projects supported by SFB313, and comprises 25 chapters by groups (sometimes large groups) of scientists reviewing the progress made in particular areas. There is a focus on the palaeoceanographic record as revealed by sediments, but many other areas are covered, including modern-day oceanography, sea ice, plankton, and benthos.

The book begins with a review of the northern North Atlantic by the editors, followed by an excellent overview by Ramseier and others of sea-ice conditions in the Greenland Sea (Ramseier, a Canadian, was a guest scientist on SFB313). Then comes a series of chapters based on the work of the various SFB313 working groups, in each case prefaced by an overview followed by specialist chapters. Noji and others give the overview on processes of carbon production, export, and remineralization in the seasonally ice-covered Greenland Sea based on long-term sediment traps, followed by two chapters by Peinert and others on specialised results from the Norwegian and Greenland seas, respectively.

Schröder-Ritzrau and others write on how oceanographic domains in the region are distinguished on the

basis of the export of different plankton assemblages, including their composition and interannual variability, contrasting the dominance of coccolithophores and foraminifera in the Norwegian Sea with diatoms and radiolarians in the Greenland Sea. Matthiessen and others then cover the distribution of plankton in the surface sediments, showing how these indicate different surface water masses.

Thomsen and Van Weering briefly discuss sediment transport on shelves, then Fohrmann and others give an extensive review of sediment transport into the deep ocean by turbidity plumes and other mechanisms. Rumohr and others show results of near-bottom sediment transport measurements covering Holocene and Late Glacial times.

Piepenburg and others review the distribution and structure of benthic fauna, showing that they are most abundant in marginal ice zones, polynyas, and anticyclonic gyres, reflecting food availability. Ritzrau and others then have two chapters reviewing exchange processes across the sediment–water interface, including the role of benthic–pelagic coupling and carbon dynamics. Specialised chapters follow on the benthic cycle of particulate organic carbon and biogenic silica (Schlüter and others), and on microbial enzyme activity in the benthos (Köster and Meyer-Reil).

Climate change enters the picture with a review of the stability of gas hydrates along the Norwegian continental margin (Mienert and others); a collapse of a gas hydrate formation could release large quantities of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Hald then gives a general review of climate change and palaeoceanography, leading on to some chapters on techniques for palaeoceanographic investigations: the use of plankton analysis (Hass and others), palaeoceanographic proxy species (Weinelt and others), biomarker proxies (Russell-Melé), and planktonic and benthic foraminifera (Bauch and others).

Using these techniques Sarnthein and others discuss basic modes and abrupt changes in the North Atlantic circulation and climate during the past 60,000 years, while Schäfer-Neth and Paul give their views on the circulation of the glacial Atlantic. The only truly theoretical paper is by Peltier and Sakai, who hypothesise that sustained non-linear oscillations of the thermohaline circulation might account for the mysterious Dansgaard-Oeschger oscillations of temperature that are scattered through the climatic record. Finally Thiede and others give a critical appraisal of the entire range of SFB313 scientific results.

For anyone seeking a general introduction to the structure, plankton, and sediments of the Nordic Seas this book is too detailed, but as a review of latest research results it is invaluable. (Peter Wadhams, Scott Polar

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**IN THE TEETH OF THE WIND.** Alain Hubert and Dixie Dansercoer, with Michel Brent. 2001. Bluntisham: Bluntisham Books and Erskine Press. viii + 210 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-85297-066-9. £24.95; US\$45.00.

DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403223184

While lecturing to tourists among the icebergs at Paradise Harbour off the Antarctic Peninsula, I couldn't help feeling very aware of the contrast between life aboard ship and the spartan conditions on an Antarctic expedition. This is particularly true of one like the stunning 4000 km Antarctic traverse by the two Belgians, Alain Hubert and Dixie Dansercoer, during the summer of 1997/98.

Having supped both ways during visits to Antarctica, I know both the harsh privations of life on the sparkling polar plateau, the alarming arithmetic that concludes you won't make it — you have insufficient food — and, on the other side of the coin, the calm consideration of a menu for the evening's repast. Both styles have their merits.

It's the solitude, the cavernous need for self-reliance, that make the expeditionary experience so enticing. It's the need to learn and blend with the environment, to keep an even psychological keel, to have an eye for detail and another on the big picture. I have some insight into this, as, a year after Hubert and Dansercoer skied across Antarctica in such remarkable style, I set off with two companions to ski from the Ross Sea to the South Pole myself. We established a new route, ascending the great spillway of the Shackleton Glacier, but we were not able to complete the return journey, and, more disappointingly, it was unquestionably the loneliest expedition of my career. The chemistry inside the tent was devoid of any real generosity of spirit, and we proceeded to replay the acrimony of so many of the polar expeditions that had preceded us.

It is this contrast that makes the Belgian expedition such a remarkable success. The story of their ski and sail traverse of Antarctica from the South African side to the Ross Sea via the South Pole is an honest diarised account by two superb practitioners of polar travel. The book both tells about their quest to cross nearly 4000 km of Antarctica by ski and sail, and explores issues to do with the human spirit. Both Hubert and Dansercoer are deeply inquiring people, happy to adopt alternative strategies and philosophies. But they were very practical too. As Hubert wrote: 'One of the most decisive bases for mental work was, without doubt, the eradication of all spirit of competition. An expedition is not and cannot be conceived of as a competition.'

Armed with carefully researched information about Antarctic weather and the direction of winds, they chose a route that allowed them to harness the winds with specially designed sails that enabled them to be drawn across the continent behind their kites for 3340 of the total 3924 km journey. This was no accident, because they

had taken care in every facet of expedition preparation, including skiing to the North Pole, two traverses of Greenland, and an 'acclimatisation' visit to Antarctica, before setting out on this undertaking. But it wasn't to be plain sailing, all the same.

As Hubert wrote on day 25 of their journey: 'But then, after ten minutes, I don't know where I am anymore. I have the impression after every 20 metres that I'm going to come upon the spot where we pitched the tent . . . If I'm lost, I'm done for, completely and utterly done for . . . Now its real panic: my throat is dry, my breathing turns into panting.' He continued later: 'I can only imagine one possible answer — poisoning! Unbelievable, really . . . It would have to be the stove . . .'

By day 30, their sleds had been badly damaged by the terrain and needed replacement, so their 'unsupported' status disappeared, as they stowed the old ones in a Twin Otter that flew in and loaded up the new ones to continue on. But what does 'unsupported' really mean in these days of satellite telephones, emergency beacons, and ski-equipped aircraft? In 1911, when Amundsen and Scott were sledging to the Pole, there was no possibility of rapidly deployed assistance, and yet they had laid depots so were not considered unsupported. But such comparisons are erroneous. The explorers of a century ago were committed to the core; more than we will ever know. Now, 'unsupported' is a style of travel; it achieves the maximum self-reliance for such a journey today. It achieves a certain purity, just as 'alpine style' puts the emphasis on the skill and drive of the individual climber ahead of overwhelming logistics in the mountains.

Hubert and Dansercoer's commitment was shown by their perseverance through adversity. 'What on earth is he doing? Is he flying away, or what?' Hubert wrote. 'A second or two later, and he falls heavily back to the ice. His sledge overturns. He's not moving . . .' Dansercoer had a bad sailing accident in difficult winds and broke some ribs. Hubert helped him into the tent that he erected and, while his injured friend slept: 'I go back into the tent and spend the next three hours sewing up his sail.'

Dansercoer wrote about his companion on day 50: 'For Alain, this expedition is very psychologically demanding. For he has to bear all the weight of uncertainty about the outcome of the project on his own. What will happen if we cannot go further than the Pole? . . . To have organised an adventure such as this on his own, as he has, is a task of superhuman proportion, which merits the respect that I feel for him.'

Later, he wrote: 'Turning round, I can't see Alain. Alone. All alone . . . At last his silhouette emerges from the white-out. We tell each other that we must be completely mad to allow ourselves to get so far apart.'

Then, on day 95: 'We practically fall asleep on our skis. It's with trembling eyes that we consult the GPS screen: 79°82.7' latitude south, or a distance of 271 km in a straight line!' Their last few days on the Ross Ice Shelf

saw them travel extraordinary distances using their sails: 271 km, followed by 140 km, followed by 97 km.

The duo completed their astonishing polar journey from the former Roi Baudouin Base to McMurdo Sound in 98 days. Judging by what they have written and the way they looked in the photographs, they appeared to be still pretty happy in each other's company at the end of it. Now that *is* an accomplishment.

If you like to cuddle up by the fire and dream of adventure at the ends of the Earth, you should read this story. It's the account of one of the south's great adventures. If you are contemplating a polar journey this is a compulsory text. This is the future of polar travel. (Peter Hillary, 17 Lewin Road, Epsom, Auckland 1003, New Zealand.)

**FROM BARROW TO BOOTHIA: THE ARCTIC JOURNAL OF CHIEF FACTOR PETER WARREN DEASE, 1836–1839.** William Barr (Editor). 2002. Montreal, Kingston, London, Ithaca: McGill–Queen's University Press (Rupert's Land Record Society series no 7). xii + 330 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-7735-2253-0. Can\$37.95. DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403233180

'It was strangely, unwisely and unjustly determined that the nominal chief command should not be vested in my brother. It was bestowed on Mr Peter Warren Dease . . . ' (Alexander Simpson, 1845, quoted in Stone 1989: 7).

With these words, Alexander Simpson gave his views of the decision of the Hudson's Bay Company not to appoint his brother, Thomas Simpson, as leader of its 1836–39 expedition to the Arctic coasts of North America, but rather to appoint Peter Warren Dease to the post. There is no doubt whatsoever that the Company was wise to do this since, although Simpson was energetic, tough, and ambitious, he was also young, conceited, inexperienced, and bigoted with regard to matters of race. The Company reasoned that a wiser, more tolerant, and older head was needed and, from the entire rank of senior officers at its disposal, a better choice could not have been made than Dease. The expedition was a complete success. At insignificant cost, it completed the initial survey of outstanding gaps in the map of coastline, leaving just one for the future.

The historiography of the expedition is slender, even though it was one of the most successful Arctic expeditions of all time. It merits a mere 53 entries in Day's *Search for the Northwest Passage* as compared, for example, with 25 for Forsyth's 1850 Franklin search expedition in *Prince Albert*, which achieved virtually nothing (Day 1986: 397–403; 501–503). Furthermore, it lacks balance. The publication of Simpson's posthumous memoirs and his brother's biography of him, from which the above quotation is taken, shortly after the return of the expedition, slanted subsequent writing in the direction of lauding Simpson's part in the work to the neglect of the part played by Dease.

Therefore, the publication of Dease's journal of the expedition is to be welcomed as providing a means through which the respective parts played in the expedition by the two 'Commissioned Gentlemen' appointed to it can be assessed. The journal is written in a terse, matter-of-fact style that one might expect of a person who had spent so many years in the fur trade, including involvement in previous expeditions in association with, for example, John Franklin. Not surprisingly, the journal entries are short for the periods during which the expedition was wintering in its base at Fort Confidence on Great Bear Lake. They are much longer and more detailed for the periods during which it was travelling: during the summer of 1837 when it completed the survey of the coast west of the Mackenzie Delta to Point Barrow; during the summer of 1838 when it made its first attempt at travelling eastwards of Franklin's Point Turnagain only to be frustrated by ice; and during the summer of 1839 when it succeeded in journeying to Montreal Island in Chantrey Inlet, thereby fulfilling its instructions, and even beyond.

The journal affords a fascinating insight into how the Hudson's Bay Company actually went about organising an expedition of this type and of the astonishing efficiency with which the whole operation was carried through. Indeed, from Dease's fairly cryptic comments, one would hardly imagine that there were any difficulties at all, but when one reflects on the circumstances in which the work was done, especially the weather through which they frequently travelled on foot or in their open boats, *Castor* and *Pollux*, one can only marvel at the hardihood of Dease, Simpson, and their men.

It is, of course, well known that Simpson applied to lead a further expedition to complete the survey of the coast in 1840 and that this was approved by the Hudson's Bay Company. Unfortunately, the news did not reach Simpson in time to prevent him from setting off to visit the Company headquarters in London to press his case. While travelling through what is now Minnesota, he met an untimely death, which was either murder or suicide. As his travelling companions were 'half breeds,' and in view of his prejudices, it is perhaps not surprising that some mishap occurred. This, in itself, proves how wise the Company had been to appoint Dease to the leadership of the expedition.

Simpson's early death gave rise to the publication of his memoirs and the biography by his brother, both of which are full of criticism of Dease. Even though Dease was alive when the books were published, it is noteworthy that he does not appear to have commented in any way on them, and there does not seem to have been any attempted refutation. A point of importance, as William Barr, the editor, notes, is that Dease, for his part, never made any derogatory comments about Simpson, although he must have been a severe trial at times. For example, Dease had his family with him during the winterings at Fort Confidence and, as his wife was a native American, his children were 'half breeds.' Simpson's forthright

and bigoted opinions about them had been frequently expressed and one can hardly feel that he restrained his prejudices.

This book would be valuable if it was merely what is claimed in the title. But Barr has done much more. After an introductory essay, the work is organised in chapters divided on a chronological basis. Each has its own introduction and exhaustive critical apparatus and comprises a section of Dease's journal. But in addition to this, each includes a careful selection of relevant correspondence about the expedition and other documents. These encompass, *inter alia*, letters from George Simpson, the Governor of Rupert's Land, and Thomas Simpson's relative, to the members of the expedition; their joint and individual reports; letters from them to Company officers relating to such matters as supplies; and letters to various friends. Significantly, when Simpson was writing his private letters, he seldom missed an opportunity to claim that *he* had achieved all that had been achieved by the expedition, and by implication that, if Dease had not been involved, much more could and would have been achieved. Not only that, but there are continual derogatory and disloyal comments about Dease, even in letters to George Simpson, their mutual chief. For example, on 18 September 1838 he wrote that 'my excellent senior is so much engrossed with family affairs that he is disposed to risk nothing and is, therefore, the last man in the world for a discoverer' (page 202). Dease, for his part, complimented Simpson on the active part he had played in the expedition.

Barr's achievement with this book is that he has, within one volume, presented sufficient information so that anyone interested in the expedition needs only it, and the two works referred to above relating to Simpson, to secure a complete picture. Only in the unlikely event of the discovery of fresh documents relating to the expedition need very much more be said about it, and there are very few Arctic expeditions for which this degree of completion is the case.

The work is very attractively presented and one must observe that, yet again, McGill-Queen's University Press has produced a book up to a quality and not down to a price, although that is very reasonable for a book of this quality. The illustrations are excellent. There is a series of carefully prepared maps covering all areas of the expedition's operations, although there might, with advantage, have been a general map of northern Canada, showing the numerous places referred to in the text that were relevant to the expedition but that were farther south in the country. There is a frontispiece showing Fort Confidence in 1848 as refurbished for Rae's and Richardson's expedition and reproductions of Dease's commissions as chief trader and chief factor and member of council. It is unfortunate that these have been transposed so that the captions are the wrong way round. No portrait of Dease is included, presumably because none exists. Somehow this seems appropriate for such a self-effacing man. In addition there are useful

biographical sketches of persons relevant to the story, as well as full references.

There seem to have been remarkably few slips. While it is always flattering to be cited in a work of this nature, it is doubly so if the citation is correct. This reviewer's opinions about Thomas Simpson are somewhat more trenchant than are those of the editor, and one of his comments cited was that, even when young, Simpson did 'not seem to have had an inadequate view of his own potential' (Stone 1989: 3). Unfortunately, the negative in the above statement has been omitted in the text (page 297) indicating a wholly untypical modesty on Simpson's behalf.

But this is merely to cavil. This is a first-class work of scholarship and one in which the editor and publisher may take the highest satisfaction. The book is a pleasure in every respect and one would urge all those with interests in Arctic history to read it without delay. (Ian R. Stone, Laggan Juys, Larivane Close, Andreas, Isle of Man IM7 4HD.)

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**ICE WINDOW: LETTERS FROM A BERING STRAIT VILLAGE, 1892–1902.** Kathleen Lopp Smith and Verbeck Smith (Editors). 2002. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press. xx + 389 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-889963-20-8. US\$34.95.

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This richly illustrated and annotated volume reproduces a series of letters sent home by Ellen and Frances Kittredge from the Inupiat village of Kingegan at the turn of the last century. The Kittredge sisters arrived in the village to teach in the recently established Presbyterian mission school. The other significant figure in the correspondence is William Thomas Lopp, the head teacher who established the school and who married Ellen two weeks after she arrived. The mission school at Kingegan, Cape Prince of Wales, was one of three schools established by Dr Sheldon Jackson when he became the first general agent of the Alaska Bureau of Education in 1889. Facing the Siberian mainland, it was one of the more distant sites from Anchorage (other than the school at Point Barrow). Although the location could not be described as remote due to the intense traffic of whalers and traders through the strait at this time, the Lopps were the first non-native couple (presumably since Russian times) to stay in the settlement and raise a family. The letters capture their process of exploration in birthing and



raising their children, as well as in establishing their home, along with their friends and parishioners in the community.

As the foreword (written by Dorothy Jean Ray) and preface indicate, the Lopps were extremely tolerant and open-minded mission teachers. They dressed themselves and their children in local clothing, and they themselves studied the language. Although the letters are silent about her opinion of her husband, Ellen in many places confesses her wish that local traditions of polygamy and early marriage could continue, and she expresses doubts about some of the stories in the Old Testament Christian Bible. Inupiat ritual specialists — shamans — are referred to in the letters as ‘doctors.’ The mission school included a programme of economic self-sufficiency through the introduction of domestic reindeer husbandry. The letters capture the lives and struggles of the first Yup’ik herders from Siberia and their later replacement Saami stewards. The lively and casual manner in which these interactions are described, as well as the guarded and often righteous commentary on the Yankee traders, brings forth a rich picture of social life in a region that was arguably much more cosmopolitan than in the days after the Cold War.

The overriding theme of the correspondence is a comparative commentary on the struggles of women in traditional Inupiat society with those in nineteenth-century colonial American society. The texts are mostly about the challenges of mixing duty with raising the Lopps’ large family. The reflections on Inupiat advice about birthing are a fascinating ethnographic document and supplement the first-hand ethnographic writing of Anne Fienup-Riordan in a neighbouring Yup’ik community (1990). The text is expertly annotated by Ellen Lopp’s granddaughter Kathleen, and Kathleen’s husband Verbeck Smith. They use discrete footnotes in the margins of the text giving the reader explanations and guides to further readings on local Inupiat ritual. The bibliography gives a good set of readings on the history and ethnography of the area.

The one disappointment is that the letters themselves give little commentary on how Inupiat interpreted the Bible lessons they were being offered or of the particular problems the Lopps had in explaining a Protestant interpretation of the Bible. Unlike Fienup-Riordan’s other work on the Kilbuck mission to the Yup’ik (1991), or that of Kahn (1999) and Znamenski (1999) on the reception of Orthodox Christianity in native Alaskan communities, it is difficult to build up an image of conversation over belief or to gain a view of how syncretic forms of belief developed.

The book is beautifully produced and very well indexed and illustrated. The photographs and sketches are taken from the Lopp photo archive and are from the place and the time when the letters were written. According to the preface, the editors pruned the letters lightly, eliminating repetition and selecting letters that give a stronger impression of place. (David G. Anderson,

Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB24 3QY.)

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**GERMAN EXPLORATION OF THE POLAR WORLD: A HISTORY, 1870–1940.** David Thomas Murphy. 2002. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press. xiii + 273 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-8032-3205-5. £37.95.

DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403253183

The author is an associate professor of history and political science at Anderson University. He has already published on geopolitical thought in Weimar Germany and on geopolitics and the German tradition of environmental determinism. He refers to these subjects in analysing the most relevant German expeditions for exploration of the polar regions in the period 1870–1940. Having the ability to read German, the author used printed expedition reports and other papers, as well as unpublished materials from many German archives. However, his use of such archives was less than perfect: in the first endnote, he mentions that the Alfred-Wegener-Institute for Polar and Marine Research has a historical section, but it does not. Moreover, judging from his preface and the bibliography, Murphy did not contact German polar experts for references to relevant secondary literature. So he was not aware, for instance, of two dissertations on German polar research during the period 1868–1939 nor of various papers accurately setting out the facts and correcting many wrong assumptions the author has made (Krause 1992; Lüdecke 1995).

The German polar expeditions did not make spectacular geographical discoveries. Although they achieved scientific success, this often meant nothing to the German public. In the first four chapters, the author sets the exploration of the polar regions in political context. He combines the first German North Polar expeditions under Karl Koldewey (1868, 1869–70) with the multi-state Germany of the pre-unification era. The German Antarctic expeditions under the leadership of Erich von Drygalski (1901–03) and Wilhelm Filchner (1911–12) in the Wilhelmine Reich follow. Alfred Wegener’s expeditions to Greenland (1929, 1930–31) and the expedition of the International Society for the Exploration of the Arctic Regions by Means of Aircraft (Aeroarctic) with the airship *Graf Zeppelin* to the Russian Arctic (1931)

were highlights of the Weimar democracy. Finally, Alfred Ritscher's Antarctic expedition (1938/39) took place during the Third Reich of Adolf Hitler.

Murphy's concept of looking at different political circumstances of 'when' German polar expeditions occurred and how they were perceived by the public is very promising, and the book reads well. He does not pay attention to the scientific background of each expedition, but this can be excused, as he is not a historian of science. However, he also overlooks the results of the expeditions, their discussions in scientific journals, and their impact in the further development of unveiling the unknown polar world. Thus his book cannot make a serious appraisal of the contribution of the German exploration of the polar regions. In addition, the author shows little understanding of natural sciences or of polar research, and he makes numerous mistakes in telling the stories of each expedition.

Here are some corrections for the Drygalski expedition, for example. On Iles Kerguelen (an archipelago and not a single island) in the southern Indian Ocean, Drygalski established a magnetic and meteorological observatory, not an 'astronomical observation post.' At this station, the sailor Wienke, not Weinke, served as a technician for the observations according to the programme of international co-operation and not of the 'International Polar Year' (which was 1882–83). Very often Murphy picks up some details, mixes them up, and retells them in a wrong context. The most prominent mistake is the description of the wintering place of *Gauss*. He writes: 'The stations of the vessel . . . had to be set up not on land, as had been planned, but over three thousand meters of water . . .' (page 78). Actually, *Gauss* had been frozen in at the Antarctic Circle, where the continental shelf was at a depth of no more than 385 m. Further, it is astonishing that Murphy totally neglects to mention the fourth simultaneous expedition, that is, the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition under William Speirs Bruce (1902–04), which formed part of the international magnetic and meteorological co-operation. Murphy's evaluation of the German expedition in comparison with the British fails in respect to political rivalry and scientific achievements. Finally, a picture of Erich von Drygalski, the leading polar expert in Germany, instead of the meteorologist of the base station at Kerguelen, should have been included.

Some other remarks document Murphy's lack of understanding of the area. He states that, concerning Filchner's expedition, where *Deutschland* was trapped by ice and drifted in the Weddell Sea Gyre for a year, 'little of scientific value was taken' (page 102). However, Erich Barkow performed 255 aerological observations of the upper atmosphere, which were representative for decades. 'Zeppelin built an airship hangar on Spitsbergen in 1912' (page 110). Rather than a hangar, a meteorological observatory was built. 'Wegener was a geologist of global distinction' (page 127). In fact, Alfred Wegener was trained as a meteorologist, and his ideas on continental drift were not acknowledged by the geological community of

his time. During the Wegener expedition 'meteorological and geological data would be collected . . . simultaneously with stations operating at the eastern edge of the ice and . . . Ice Central, a station to be located hundreds of meters above sea level' (page 132). Not only does Murphy mix up 'geological' with 'glaciological,' but no geologist took part in the expedition. It is, of course, pure nonsense to use 'simultaneous measurements' in connection with geological investigations. And the primary station on the western rim of the Greenland ice sheet was already situated at about 1000 m height and Ice Central at about 3000 m.

In the fifth chapter Murphy turns to the German image of the polar world, but many sections are so general that they can also be applied to other nationalities. He writes, for instance, 'expeditions served as proving grounds for Germanic manhood' (page 155). Skip 'Germanic' and one can use the comment for Nansen, Amundsen, or Scott. Murphy mentions that 'Enzensperger recorded their hunting kills with a pornographic attention to bloody detail' (page 163). 'Pornographic'? Hunting was a usual part of expeditions at the time, because fresh meat was a significant addition to the provisions. And where is the typical German romance of the Eskimo, if one thinks of the Danish point of view for instance? Not the Greenlandic word 'umiak,' but 'anorak' was introduced into European usage.

One might ask from where Murphy obtained his information. Perhaps in part because of wrong numbering of the footnotes starting from page 166, it is not easy to follow the author's ideas on the polar image. 'The sentimental image of the innocent and virtuous child of nature . . . was a fantasy of the time that reflected the peculiar characteristics of German interaction with the polar world and its inhabitants' (page 177). Perhaps it was a fantasy of the time, but it was also characteristic of other nations' interactions. The last chapter on 'Aryan Aurora' bears many mistakes. It was Amundsen, not Nansen, who navigated the Northwest Passage in *Gjøa* in 1903–06, and it was Drygalski, not Filchner, who returned to a telegraph station at Cape Town in 1903. Referring to the third German Antarctic expedition, the first proposal came from the Foreign Ministry and not from the Four Year's staff, as archival material revealed some years ago.

The epilogue, in which Murphy gives an analysis from the historical point of view, is his best contribution. It shows the value such a book could have, had the author had the help of an expert in German polar research. But, in summary, it would be a pity if the book as it is were used as a source book by the English-reading public. (Cornelia Lüdecke, Chair of History of Natural Sciences, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, München, Germany.)

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**‘HELL WITH A CAPITAL H’: AN EPIC STORY OF ANTARCTIC SURVIVAL.** Katherine Lambert. 2002. London: Pimlico. xv + 208 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-7126-7995-2. £12.50. DOI: 10.1017/S003224740326318X

Let it be said at once that this is a well-researched and beautifully written book. It concerns the exploits and tribulations of the Northern Party of Captain Robert Falcon Scott’s *Terra Nova* Expedition, 1910–13, and is one of the great survival stories of men in adversity, but it was eclipsed in public memory by the tragedy that overtook the Polar Party. The present author has gone far to set the record straight.

Lieutenant (later Captain) Victor Campbell, RN, Scott’s third-in-command of the expedition, was placed in charge of what was originally known as the Eastern Party. At the end of January 1911, under Scott’s orders, Campbell sailed *Terra Nova* eastward along the edge of the Ross Ice Shelf towards the unexplored King Edward VII Land, where it was hoped to establish a field station.

Campbell sailed eastward to Cape Colbeck at the western extremity of Edward VII Peninsula (as now named), but was there unable to land. Sailing back westward and looking for a place to land on the ice shelf, his party came upon Amundsen’s Framheim at the Bay of Whales. Civilities were exchanged, but any idea of a British camp there was out of the question. The Norwegians might be very good skiers, but by being in Britain’s *chasse gardée* they were certainly not playing cricket! The author poses the intriguing might-have-been of Campbell’s being able to land at Cape Colbeck and the ship bypassing the Bay of Whales during its return to Cape Evans, with Scott thus remaining ignorant of Amundsen’s plans.

As it was, and following his return to Cape Evans, Campbell put into operation Scott’s contingency plan for his party — to establish a camp at Cape Adare, the northwestern point of the Ross Sea. His six-man party was duly landed there in mid-February 1911, *Terra Nova* being sailed back to New Zealand under Lieutenant Henry Pennell, RN. Thus Campbell’s party now became the Northern Party. Campbell had with him Surgeon (later Surgeon Commander) Murray Levick, Raymond Priestley of the scientific staff, Petty Officer George Abbott, Petty Officer Frank Browning, and Able Seaman Harry Dickason. In writing this book, the author has drawn on the published diaries of Campbell, Priestley’s book, and, most especially, on Levick’s recently available unpublished journal.

From a background of Eton, the Merchant Navy, and an emergency commission in the Royal Navy, Campbell was a reserved and very ‘pusser’ officer, who ran a

‘tight ship’ during the party’s 11 months at Cape Adare. Following their relief by *Terra Nova* in January 1912, they were landed down the coast to the south of Inexpressible Island for planned local exploration of no more than two months. However, sea-ice conditions and fuel shortage prevented relief by *Terra Nova*, and the Northern Party was forced to winter at Inexpressible Island. In the close confines of an ice cave as their winter quarters, even Campbell could not uphold such a discipline as at Cape Adare. Nevertheless, and perhaps with a touch of commendable humour, he drew a line down the centre of the cave to separate wardroom from messdeck, with nothing said on one side to be ‘heard’ on the other!

It was in this situation that Levick came into his own, with his special rapport as a doctor with all members of the party. He carefully monitored the health and morale of them all, with vigilance against scurvy, although this was hardly likely on a diet of mainly seal and penguin. By the time the party arrived back at Cape Evans in November 1912, after Campbell had led them across 230 miles of sea ice, they had become welded in a cast-iron fellowship, for which as much credit was due to Levick as to Campbell.

The Northern Party returned to a Cape Evans hut occupied by only two men, and first learned of the fate of the Polar Party. The remaining 11 members of the base under Surgeon Edward Atkinson, RN, were out on the Ross Ice Shelf, where they were to find Scott’s last camp. Campbell’s safe return had justified Atkinson’s agonizing decision to search for the dead, rather than to relieve the Northern Party. Campbell was now in command at Cape Evans — with Levick as his second-in-command — and responsible for the closing down of the base prior to the sad return to New Zealand in *Terra Nova* in February 1913.

Minor errors in this book include: in the Arctic, the North Pole is 500 miles north of Ward Hunt Island, not of Resolute; on his return from the Antarctic, Campbell was promoted not to Commodore, but to Commander; and the silver Polar Medal was awarded to *all* members of the shore parties and of *Terra Nova*’s company that made two voyages, regardless of rank, with the bronze medal going to those who made only one voyage. A commendable feature of the book is the gazetteer of place-names, with variant forms in earlier use.

In summary, this book is a classic of its kind, which deserves to be widely read. (Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith, *The Crossways*, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2AG.)

**THE YUKON RELIEF EXPEDITION AND THE JOURNAL OF CARL JOHAN SAKARIASSEN.** V.R. Rausch and D.L. Baldwin (Editors). J.P. Nelson (Translator). 2002. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press. 264 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 1-889963-33-X. US\$26.95. DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403273186

The stories of the relief expeditions of 1897 to 1899, during which attempts were made to aid miners in distress on the Yukon River, and others in need, including beset

whalers, by providing reindeer are, at least in outline, well known. This book concentrates on one of those efforts, proposed by Sheldon Jackson — then United States agent for education in Alaska — and approved by the US government. The plan was for reindeer and herders, as well as other workers, to be procured in Finnmark, Norway; transported across the Atlantic by sea; across North America by rail; northwards along the west coast to Alaska, again by sea; and then on foot to the mining camps along the Yukon River. This seems so convoluted a journey that it is not surprising that, by the time the herders with their reindeer had arrived close to the scene of operations, the emergency was passing. Nothing daunted, it was decided to use the expertise of some of the Norwegians to establish a centre for reindeer husbandry near Unalakleet. One of these men was Carl Johan Sakariassen, whose journal of his travels from Norway to Alaska and of his work there, is here presented in entirety for the first time.

This is the type of book that historians always, or *should* always, relish. It presents a plain straightforward narrative, by a man whose powers of observation were more than ordinarily astute, and who had no obvious personal axe to grind, of events that became of great importance in the development of Alaska. Moreover, the writer, concerned to ensure the accuracy of his account, asked four of his colleagues on the expedition to attest to this by adding their signatures to the original. This they duly did.

Sakariassen started his journal on 2 February 1898 with a brief note of his reason for undertaking it. This was simply that out of a diary ‘there will never be a lack of material for the contents of a little book of recollections . . .’ (page 64), which he possibly had in mind for the future. The journal continues with almost daily entries covering the voyage across the Atlantic in the ancient vessel *Manitoban*. This was enlivened by a series of large storms, one of which was so severe that the ‘Lapp’ herders ‘stopped playing cards’ and which caused many others ‘to go about with grave expressions, for this is certainly not amusing’ (page 69). Jackson, who was on board the vessel, was the subject of some muted criticism by Sakariassen relating to the fact that the men found themselves cleaning out the reindeer stalls, which work ‘was in no way ours to do, but rather that of the ship’s crew.’ He suggested that it was possible that ‘there was some bribery between the captain and Dr Jackson for a few dollars’ (page 71). *Manitoban* arrived in New York at the end of February, and the personnel and reindeer were divided into two trainloads for the trip across the United States, which started almost immediately and arrived at the west coast a week later. Embarkation at Seattle took place on 15 March and arrival in Alaskan waters on 24 March.

The first experiences in Alaska were not auspicious, since the expedition was running out of the vital ‘reindeer moss’ and great efforts had to be made to procure further supplies. Eventually some of the party ascended the

Chilkot Pass into Canada, while the remainder returned to Port Townsend, from whence they were to travel to western Alaska to fulfil the revised plan for the operation. Before this, on 18 June, all of that party became US citizens, thereby enabling them to claim ‘government land’ in Alaska. The rest of the journal recounts Sakariassen’s experiences in Eaton Reindeer Station, near Unalakleet, which had to be built from scratch, with the imperative of winter coming, and at other places on the coast. By this time gold had been discovered at Nome and several of the party resigned their appointments in order to prospect there. From 1 January 1899, Sakariassen wrote up his diary on a weekly rather than a daily basis. He, too, resigned from the service on 8 April and undertook an overland journey to Nome in order to stake a claim, arriving there on 12 May. For the summer he worked for himself and for others and, with the advent of winter, departed for San Francisco, where he arrived in November. This concluded his journal.

The editors, who are Sakariassen’s daughters, have succeeded in their task. When one discovers that editors of works such as this are related to the writer, one suspects that a degree of sycophancy might enter into their judgement. But of this there is only the merest trace and it in no way reduces the value of the work. They have included a most comprehensive critical apparatus, and their diligence in combing the official and unofficial sources for the expedition merits high encomium. They include an introductory essay, covering 48 pages, with 13 pages of notes and references, and divided into nine sections, on the inception of the expedition, the passage of its plan through the legislature, and the work of Jackson and his associates in England, where the ship was chartered, and in Finnmark, where the reindeer and the workers were secured. One point that could have merited more comment in this essay was the diplomatic aspect of the project. The editors include quotations from members of the US Congress showing that they were aware that the area in which the miners were in difficulties was in Canada, but the editors include no reference to representations to the government of that country with regard to the projected incursion onto its territory.

After the introduction, the journal itself commences, and the reader suddenly finds not a single footnote! This is puzzling, and slightly alarming, until one realises that, after the end of the journal, there are no fewer than 21 pages of informative annotations, arranged on a daily basis, with some being longer than the diary entries themselves. The editors include an epilogue concerning events following the end of the journal and a note on the history of the journal itself, which was lost for some time. There are a full bibliography and an index. There are numerous contemporary photographs, including some of documents, which are very effective in illustrating the text; there are also maps of the path of the expedition from Norway to Alaska and of the main scenes of activity. These are the only major points in the book



at which improvement might have been possible, as the cartography is fairly crude.

The translation appears to be effective in preserving the meaning of the original while at the same time reading fluently in English and retaining the mature demeanour of Sakariassen's prose together with his modest wit.

To sum up: a most interesting book and one that renders an important primary source for Alaskan history available to specialists. For the editors, the work was obviously a labour of love, and it is encouraging that they have donated their royalties from the publication to the Nature Conservancy. It is a matter for regret that these are not likely to be large from a publication of this type. The editors, translator, and publisher are to be congratulated on the successful completion of a very worthwhile project. (Ian R. Stone, Laggan Juys, Larivane Close, Andreas, Isle of Man IM7 4HD.)

**I AM JUST GOING OUTSIDE: CAPTAIN OATES — ANTARCTIC TRAGEDY.** Michael Smith. 2002. London: Spellmount Publishers. 301 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-86227-178-X. £20.00. DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403283182

There are few words so iconic in the history of polar exploration as those uttered by Captain Oates as he stumbled from the tent to his death, leaving behind his companions on their return from the South Pole on Robert Falcon Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition. 'I am just going outside and may be some time,' was recorded by Scott in his final diary, and this phrase has come to represent the ultimate heroism of a gallant English gentleman. Indeed, the first biography of Captain Lawrence Oates, published in 1933 by Louis Bernacchi, physicist on Scott's first expedition, was entitled *A very gallant gentleman*. In this latest biography, Michael Smith emphasises that the expedition took place just before the Great War. 'Oates was a symbol of Britishness at a time when the country was under most pressure and people drew strength from his heroism. It was a time for heroes, unlike the modern day preoccupation with villains.' Not that Smith sets out to exploit weaknesses in the character of Oates, nor to detract from his selfless devotion to Scott. The author, with the hindsight of almost one hundred years of history, and access to Oates' letters to his mother and other family documents — kept secret for decades — as well as Lord Kennet's family archives and other source material held at the Scott Polar Research Institute, has re-examined the life of Oates and some of the mysteries surrounding him.

This is the third biography of Oates; the second, *Captain Oates, soldier and explorer*, by Sue Limb and Patrick Cordingley, was published in 1982. However, this is the first biography to make known the existence of hundreds of letters written by Oates to his family, principally to his mother. Some of these letters were transcribed by Oates' sister Violet, before she destroyed them after her mother's death and in accordance with her mother's wishes. Even today Smith had no co-operation

from the surviving Oates family, except for one great-nephew.

It is reasonable to seek the differences between the present volume and the earlier book by Limb and Cordingley. Structurally the two books are similar, treating, quite naturally in a biography, Oates' life chronologically. Both deal with the family's Yorkshire estates and the connection with Meanwood, a suburb of Leeds, where the family lived in some prosperity. By the time of Lawrence's birth, the family had moved to London, and Lawrence Edward Grace Oates was born at 3 Acacia Villas, Putney, on 17 March 1880. Although he had an older and a younger sister and one younger brother, Laurie, as he was known to the family, was always the favourite, particularly with his formidable mother, Caroline. She continued to refer to him as 'Baby Boy' well into his adulthood. Smith devotes an entire chapter to the strong influence that Caroline had on her favourite son and refers to it frequently in the succeeding text. When in childhood Oates was deemed to benefit from a holiday in South Africa, Caroline left the other children and accompanied her son and husband there. When Oates contemplated applying for membership of Scott's expedition, it was Caroline who found £1000 as a persuasive contribution to the *Terra Nova* fund, and when news of Oates' death reached her, she retreated to her rooms in the new home, Gestingthorpe Hall, Essex, and refused to receive visitors. Somewhat like Queen Victoria at the death of Albert, she shunned contact with the public, in Caroline's case for the rest of her life.

The book then traces in detail Oates' subsequent career, from his earliest education to his military service, and to his enrolment on *Terra Nova*. As a child, Laurie was often in poor health, and two visits were made to Cape Province for recuperation. At prep school, and later at Eton, he struggled with formal education; it appears that he had some form of dyslexia. In spite of attending a 'crammers' at Eastbourne, he was unable to reach the minimum standard for Oxford entrance. He had little interest in literature and was unable to master mathematics. Scott later found that Oates could not comprehend columns of figures and relieved him of the task of logging the forage arrangements for the ponies. However Oates was good at boxing and he developed a great love for horses; he was delighted to be offered a commission, in 1900, in the Inniskilling Dragoons, an Irish cavalry regiment, and one of the most distinguished in the British Army. He was soon in South Africa, in the Boer War. Leading a patrol under enemy fire, he so distinguished himself that he was recommended for the Victoria Cross, although he was ultimately awarded the Queen's Medal instead. Thereafter, 'Titus' (as he was then generally called) and his patrol were known as the 'No Surrender Oates' unit. He did suffer, however, a serious wound to the bone of one leg and afterwards had a permanent limp. His next posting, in 1908, was to Mdhow in the province of Madya Pradesh in India. Life there was easy — he went hunting regularly, and was the Master

of Hounds — but he became disaffected with the laxity of the lifestyle.

In 1910 his unexpected escape appeared in the prospect of joining Scott on an expedition to Antarctica. He explained to his regiment's Captain Yardley: 'I told Scott that I had no intention of being left at the base and that I should want to be in the party to make the dash for the Pole.' That Scott should have accepted Oates, from 8000 others, without interview and on the basis of recommendation alone, may seem quixotic, but Oates, like the short-sighted Cherry-Garrard, was offering £1000 for the privilege, and, moreover, Scott needed an expert in the management of horses. When Oates saw the Manchurian ponies he remarked, 'A more unpromising lot of ponies to start a journey such as ours it would be almost impossible to conceive.' Oates worked hard with them, and Scott wrote: 'Oates is splendid with them — I do not know what we should do without him.'

The major part of the book is the familiar account of the journey to the Cape Evans hut and the eventual long haul across the Great Barrier, up the Beardmore Glacier, across the plateau, the successful accomplishment of the South Pole, but without priority, and the awful return. Oates wrote to his mother: 'I must say we have made too much noise about ourselves, all the photographing, cheering, steaming through the fleet, etc, etc, is rot and if we fail it will only make us look foolish. They say that Amundsen has been underhand the way he has gone about it, but I personally don't see it as underhand to keep your mouth shut.' It was perhaps the view of the professional soldier. At Cape Evans, Oates was recognised as one who appreciated his own company, reserved almost to the point of taciturnity. He rarely entered into the camaraderie of the base hut, and confided principally with Meares, his fellow ostler, in the stables. To his mother he wrote: 'Scott and Evans boss the show pretty well and their ignorance about marching with animals is colossal. On several fronts Scott is going on lines contrary to what I have suggested. However if I can only persuade him to take a pony he will learn a lot this autumn.' Smith states that, 'Oates was particularly irritated that Scott appeared to ignore his advice and failed to ask for guidance on matters where Oates was undoubtedly an authority. Scott's weak management left Oates feeling excluded.' No one questioned Oates' obvious bravery and his ability to withstand the harsh environment; nevertheless he was surprised to be picked for the summit party.

Many years later, Frank Debenham commented on this clash of personalities: 'Between Oates, dry and caustic, humorous, objective in his outlook — Scott, shy and moody, temperamental and sensitive, quick in mind as in action, with the soul of a poet — there can have been little in common. Their natures jarred on one another.' Smith comments throughout the book on Scott's organisation of the expedition and the composition of the final polar party. Limb and Cordingley made their last chapter, 'Hero or victim,' a character study of Oates and his contribution

to the expedition. The final chapter of Smith's book, 'A second tragedy,' will come as a surprise to many: it is a detailed account of the illegitimate child reputedly fathered by Oates in 1900, a girl whom he may never have known, nor even been aware of. She was brought up by two caring women in a home for unmarried mothers in the south of England and named Kathleen Gray. She died in 1981. When, in 1926, she presented herself at the door of Caroline Oates at Gestingthorpe Hall, she was given short shrift.

The new biography is highly readable, very well researched with much new material, and some new illustrations. It is generously printed with wide margins and is a valuable addition to the Antarctic library. (Peter Speak, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

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### TAKE MY LAND TAKE MY LIFE: THE STORY OF CONGRESS'S HISTORIC SETTLEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVE LAND CLAIMS, 1960–1971.

Donald Craig Mitchell. 2001. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press. x+679 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 1-889963-24-0. US\$29.95.  
 DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403293189

At the outset of the congressional campaign of the 1960s to settle aboriginal land claims, which covered virtually the entire 375 million acres of land in Alaska, natives seemed likely to gain no more than 10 million acres of land and an indeterminate amount of cash. When President Richard Nixon signed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) on 18 December 1971, Alaska natives received the most generous terms in the history of the United States: \$962.5 million and 44 million acres of federal land. The settlement also was the most innovative, for the cash and lands were to be managed by state-chartered regional and village for-profit corporations, in which natives received 100 shares of stock.

Many, including this reviewer, have written about the ANCSA campaign and its role in the political development of Alaska natives and the state of Alaska. However, Mitchell's study clearly is the most exhaustively researched and now becomes the definitive work.

Mitchell's first book, *Sold American: the story of Alaska natives and their land* (1997), described how the struggle of Alaska natives for their land began in 1867, at the US purchase of Alaska from Russia, and the efforts of many to protect native land occupancy rights and prevent their being extinguished on unfair terms. *Take my land take my life* is a companion volume, which begins with

Alaska statehood in 1959. The focus of the first chapter is the development of the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), while the second examines the freeze on state land selections in 1966, which protected native rights until Congress passed ANCSA. Chapters 3–5 follow the chronology of the legislative battle in Congress, during 1969, 1970, and 1971.

The day-by-day narrative of the chapters contributes less to our understanding of ANCSA's creation than Mitchell's account of the actors, interests, and institutions, the dynamic interrelationships of which led to the outcome. He appropriately gives most attention to the AFN itself, the US Department of the Interior (including its three secretaries during the critical period of 1966–71), Alaska's governors and congressional delegation, congressional committee chairs, and the president.

From start to finish Mitchell is most sympathetic to the (then) young native leaders such as Emil Notti, Willie Hensley, Charlie Edwardsen, and Don Wright, who in October 1966 met for the first time statewide to respond to the new state's selections of lands traditionally used by natives, as part of the statehood land grant of 103.4 million acres. Mitchell does not neglect the important part played by the Association on American Indian Affairs in recruiting leaders; providing funding for travel, meetings, and legal assistance; and underwriting publication of the *Tundra Times*, the new voice of Alaska natives. Nor does he ignore tensions in AFN between the North Slope Inupiat, in whose ancestral homeland oil was discovered in 1968, and the more populous Yup'ik Eskimos, Athabascans and Tlingit Indians; the disagreements among leaders; and the conflict between AFN's lawyers, particularly Arthur Goldberg (former Supreme Court Justice) and Ramsey Clark (former US Attorney General), and its leadership. Although AFN did not determine the final details of ANCSA, it strongly influenced the process and the result.

The federal Department of the Interior created the circumstances in which a congressional settlement of native claims became essential. Secretary Stewart Udall imposed a freeze on the state's selection of lands in 1966, which prevented a pre-emptive eradication of native title; too, the land freeze put economic pressure on the state to settle claims and forced the oil industry to lobby the state and the Congress for resolution, so that construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline could begin. Nixon's first Secretary of the Interior, Wally Hickel, claimed that 'What Udall can do by executive order, I can undo' (page 83), but quickly found it necessary to recant and continue the freeze; his replacement, Rogers Morton, continued it as well.

Mitchell's portrayal of Alaska's political leaders is realistic and, for the most part, unsympathetic. The governors during the period (Hickel, Keith Miller, and Bill Egan) were impediments to a fair settlement because they resisted a large land grant and did not want the then impoverished state to participate in financing the terms. Ernest Gruening initially opposed a land settlement, and then promised to support AFN's position, while secretly

attempting to torpedo it; his replacement in 1968, Mike Gravel, pictured as ambition personified, was as 'contumaciously self-absorbed' as his predecessor. Alaska's last delegate to Congress and second Senator, Bob Bartlett, wins kind words for his good intentions, but his death in 1968 brought Ted Stevens to the Senate. Mitchell is relatively even-handed in describing the complexities of Stevens' role, although he takes typical swipes at Stevens' acerbic personality. Yet Stevens alone consistently sought a large land settlement for natives because it would increase land available for private development in Alaska. Finally, Alaska's 1971 representative in the House of Representatives, Nick Begich, with 'a penchant for self-promoting political ruthlessness that was the equal of Mike Gravel's' (page 416), nevertheless did his homework and advanced closure on native claims, in contrast to predecessors Ralph Rivers, who was not very bright, and Howard Pollock, who was not very competent. An advantage to Mitchell's treatment of Alaska's political leaders of this era is the attention he pays to the growing importance of the native vote in their success (or defeat) at the polls.

Mitchell explains carefully the institutional power of the Senate and House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee chairs, Senator Henry 'Scoop' Jackson and Representative Wayne Aspinall. Initially both opposed a large land and cash settlement, but for different reasons. Aspinall thought a generous settlement would be unprecedented in American history, because the collective value of previous Indian claims settlements had been little over \$250 million. Jackson believed 'Forty million acres... would tie up the economic development... [and] carve Alaska into a series of large racial land enclaves' (page 269). Moreover, in the unreformed Congresses of the late 1960s and early 1970s, committee chairs were kings. Indeed, the first native claims bill passing the Senate (S. 1830 in 1970, which provided a 20-million-acre land grant) was crafted to Jackson's specifications.

What broke the dam of congressional opposition was intervention from an unlikely source: President Richard M. Nixon. Still in the Civil Rights era, the president was looking for an opportunity to gain minority support. Fortuitously, Native American affairs became salient nationally, when Indians seized Alcatraz in 1969. And Nixon had fond memories of his college football coach, an American Indian, who had given him moral support, which predisposed him to support native issues. In 1970 Nixon administration support of the Taos Indians' effort to obtain title to Blue Lake brought the issue to a successful floor vote in the Senate against Jackson's opposition; it was the first loss on an Indian bill of any chair of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. Nixon's acceptance of a 40-million-acre land settlement melted congressional opposition and brought ANCSA to closure.

Although Mitchell treats most of the elected leaders and high officials in the ANCSA drama as craven opportunists motivated by raw ambition, he charitably

illustrates the role of their staffs. Nearly a dozen staff members provided essential contacts, ideas, and strategies to move legislation; they were far more than bit players in this unfolding drama.

Mitchell's history parallels, while significantly expanding on, the studies of ANCSA written within 10 years of its passage, for example Berry's *The Alaska Pipeline: the politics of oil and native land claims* (1975), Arnold's *Alaska native land claims* (1976), and McBeath and Morehouse's *The dynamics of Alaska native self-government* (1980). However, the study is published at a time of deep division in the Alaska native community, between a minority who directly benefits from ANCSA (particularly, native corporation executives) and the majority that does not, and whose views are expressed in the native sovereignty movement.

In his epilogue, Miller challenges the revisionist interpretations of ANCSA. Although he is sympathetic to the socio-economic difficulties of Alaska natives — their high rates of joblessness, alcoholism, and suicide, among other adverse conditions — he believes that criticism of the act is misplaced:

ANCSA was not, as its most vocal critics within the Native community now charge, a scheme hatched by a malevolent Congress to steal Native land and destroy traditional Native cultures by requiring Alaska Natives to organize corporations. Rather... ANCSA was an unprecedented experiment in Native American economic self-determination that Alaska Natives actively participated in crafting. (page 541)

Yet Mitchell's post-ANCSA interpretations (presumably based on his experience as a lawyer working in Alaska and for the Alaska Federation of Natives from 1977 to 1993) identify many problems with the way in which ANCSA has been implemented, which prompt him to call for a:

bluntly honest discussion regarding three questions: What is the future of Native villages in the twenty-first century? If villages have a future, what must members of Congress and the Alaska state legislature, other federal and state policymakers, and all individuals, both Native and non-Native, who care about the matter do to make that future possible? If many villages have no future, then what is to be done? (page 506)

Mitchell's book is not without flaws. At 618 pages including notes, it is too long by half for the story that it tells. The frequent excursions taken to introduce every new character who appears disrupt the flow of the narrative. And more balance in the presentation of political leaders would have given greater confidence in the author's objectivity.

However, the strengths of Mitchell's volume far outweigh these shortcomings. It is a very good piece of historical research, based on original source materials (documents and records of the participants and more than 60 personal interviews), newspaper accounts, and the extensive secondary literature, with copious endnotes. The book is readable and interesting, because

it is chock-full of personal vignettes and anecdotes. Of greatest importance, the study redresses an imbalance in recent ANCSA analyses, and it goes beyond the events of 1966–71 to ask large questions about the impact ANCSA has had on the modern native community.

*Take my land take my life* is a welcome and overdue addition to our knowledge of ANCSA, Alaska natives, and the state's political history. It also can be read as an excellent case study on the US Congress and Native American policy. Finally, because ANCSA has been much studied by natives in other regions of the circumpolar north, Mitchell's book will have an appeal beyond American readers. Hopefully, the volume will stimulate systematic and objective assessments of ANCSA implementation and its role in the changing fortunes of Alaska natives and their land. (Gerald A. McBeath, Department of Political Science, University of Alaska Fairbanks, PO Box 756420, Fairbanks, AK 99775-6420, USA.)

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**ANTARCTICA 1772–1999: FREESTANDING PUBLICATIONS THROUGH 1999.** Michael Rosove. 2001. Santa Monica, CA: Adélie Press. xxx + 537 p., illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-9705386-0-X. DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403303183

First, you will not believe that you bought this book. Then you will not believe that you started reading this book. Then you will not believe that you could not put it down. Michael Rosove's volume is one of those very rare efforts that began with a narrow focus — a bibliophile's bibliography of Antarctic books published before 2000 — yet ends up being a volume of such broad erudition that the content carries far beyond the original intent, until it emerges as a rare work of genius.

For the collector of Antarctic books, this volume immediately becomes the standard against which the book trade will measure the importance, rarity, and, to some degree, price of volumes in this field. Rosove provides all the details (physical properties of the books, editions, irregularities of printings) that are of only peripheral interest to the historian but are of vital importance to the antiquarian and collector. But where the book will have an equally great importance is in the scholarly annotations that illuminate every facet of Antarctic history from



the earliest era. Even the most serious Antarcticist will find something new and enlightening on virtually every page.

Rosove lists every freestanding publication about Antarctica from Cook's second voyage through the end of the Heroic Era (1772–1922) that he has discovered as a result of extensive research in a wide range of libraries, archives, and private collections during the past dozen years. Thus, even serious students of Antarctic history will discover extremely rare publications not listed in any other bibliography. Often these books are available only in a single library or in a private collection, and therefore Rosove opens up important information that the historian cannot otherwise secure. Similarly, scientists will find information about the often extensive scientific reports of the early expeditions. Rosove's book is the first to contain a complete list of all the scientific publications for the period covered. I trust this will lead historians of science to rethink some conclusions, as they become aware of these materials.

Paging through the volume, the reader will uncover important details and insights not previously published. Rosove is able to add details about the publication process that gives insight into the explorer whose book is under consideration. Many times the small pamphlets (like a prospectus for a forthcoming expedition) gives the serious Antarcticist a new perspective not previously considered.

Unlike some professional historians who make comments about writing 'the definitive history of. . .,' Rosove lacks such inappropriate smugness and indicates that he is interested in learning of any isolated volumes he has not listed in his bibliography. Such additions will be rare.

Adding this volume to his previous *Let heroes speak* (Naval Institute Press, 2000) confirms two things: that those who are not historians by training — Rosove is clinical professor of medicine at UCLA — can write brilliant works of historical synthesis, and that Rosove has established himself in the first rank of Antarctic historians. (T.H. Baughman, College of Liberal Arts, University of Central Oklahoma, 100 North University Drive, Edmond, OK 73034-5209, USA.)

**THE NAVIGATOR OF NEW YORK.** Wayne Johnston. 2002. New York: Doubleday; Toronto: Knopf. 486 pages; hardcover. ISBN 0-3855-0767-4. US\$27.00.  
DOI: 10.1017/S003224740331318X

Any attempt to paste a fictional plot onto the already thoroughly incredible facts of the hoary dispute between Frederick Cook and Robert E. Peary over who was first to the North Pole would seem the literary equivalent of carrying coals to Newcastle. But that is just what Wayne Johnston attempts in his new novel.

The main character, one Devlin Stead, native of St John's, Newfoundland, is obsessed with his paternity. Well he might be. His father, Francis Stead, a local

homeopath, disappears mysteriously on Peary's 1892 expedition to Greenland. Devlin grows up a mama's boy, tormented by his classmates, orphaned when his mother drowns after falling from Signal Hill into the cold North Atlantic, and left to be raised by his uncle. One day Devlin receives the first of a series of letters from Dr Frederick Cook that sets him off on the 'search for identity' plot that forms the fictional core of the book.

To make a very long story short, he successively learns through these letters, and, later, during conversations with Cook: that he is not Stead's son, but actually the offspring of Cook, himself; that his mother did not drown, but actually was thrown into the sea by his father of record (in disguise!) after extracting from her the name of the boy's true father; that Francis Stead's death was not an accident, but that he was also murdered, that his murderer was Cook in conspiracy with his arch-rival Robert E. Peary, and, not only that, Stead was killed with his own consent and cooperation. It takes a rather long train to deliver this much coal anywhere, as we discover in the book's 500 pages.

The genre of 'historical fiction' is an oxymoron to begin with. But to bring off any work that, in the words of the author, 'places real people in imaginary space and time [and] at others, imaginary people in real space and time,' the fiction must be wedded to the history seamlessly, so that the fabric does not fall apart. Ironically, one must be in utter command of the facts to get away with the fiction. On this voyage, *The navigator of New York* not only gets lost in the Arctic, but in the Antarctic as well, and even in Washington, DC.

Most of the book's credibility emanates from its citing of literally hundreds of authentic names, dates, places, and incidents associated with the Cook–Peary controversy — suitably twisted for plot turns — and many plausible concepts and descriptions of local color associated with the ends of the Earth and the two explorers' real lives and experiences. Almost all of these are directly lifted from the pages of the most recent book on the subject, *Cook & Peary, the polar controversy, resolved* (Bryce 1997). I should know. I am that book's author and have no trouble recognizing when my eight years of original research is being quoted back to me chapter and verse. Apparently, nothing in my book seemed unsuited as filler for *The navigator of New York*. At one point Johnston quotes liberally from my bibliography of Cook's published writings and at another spends several pages describing the picture of Cook that graces the dust jacket. Even aspects of his fictional characters and their histories are drawn from my pages. Francis Stead is a composite of two real historical figures who appear prominently in my book, and even the protagonist's surname is the same as a famous journalist who makes a cameo appearance in *Cook & Peary*.

That said, however, Wayne Johnston evinces remarkably little knowledge of the polar regions. He mixes the northern and southern hemispheres to amusing effect, having Cook sail for the Antarctic ice in July and begin

a sledging trip toward the South Pole in April. He even has him bring back pictures of polar bears upon his return from the utter south.

When Devlin Stead arrives in New York in pursuit of his identity, we are given a blow by blow account of his processing through Ellis Island. Trouble is, Devlin was traveling on a second class ticket, and would therefore not have been processed through Ellis Island at all, so the reader could have been saved the pages of details. The book is also padded with huge digressive descriptions of old New York itself — a full chapter at one point. The fact that cinders from the elevated trains often set alight the awnings of shops below them is of so much interest that it is repeated three times. And Johnston seems absolutely fixated on the architectural and structural details of the Brooklyn Bridge. Given the source of all of the author's polar knowledge and the fact that his borrowing really knows no shame, at one point incorporating the famous 'fourth presence' passage Ernest Shackleton wrote into *South*, one might reasonably suspect that all these New York details were cribbed from other authors' published works as well.

These details may or may not be authentic to their time, but when Cook and Devlin pay a visit to Washington in 1906, they get way ahead of their own time, and even manage to rearrange geography. They visit the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials (finished in 1922 and 1942) and cross an equally futuristic bridge over the Delaware [*sic*] (which flows by Philadelphia, about 200 miles north) instead of the Potomac River, to see hundreds of Revolutionary War graves in Arlington National Cemetery, the origins of which date to 1864, when it was first used to bury Civil War dead. (Time warps seem to run in the Stead family, as Devlin's uncle listens to his Victrola every night in 1892, although the company that eventually produced it was not incorporated until 1901.) They even manage to visit the 'modest house where George Washington lived when he was President,' although Washington never lived in Washington. Well, Johnston *is* a Canadian, and one thing seems sure: neither he nor his editor has been there either.

So much for the accidental history; how about the intended fiction? Johnston gets into trouble, again with time, in the very first line of the book, where we learn that Devlin Stead was born in 1881. When Johnston has Cook tell Devlin in a long letter — complete with pages of trivial remembered dialog and irrelevant descriptions of Central Park — how he came to be the issue of a respectably engaged Anglican 18-year-old virgin from Newfoundland, and Cook, then a 14 (!) year-old gutter urchin in hand-me-down clothes from Brooklyn (the reader is told Cook is 16, but according to Johnston, his fictional Cook was, like the historical one, born in June 1865, and the couple couple in March 1880), he seems not to be able to believe it himself. 'Was ever a person given so detailed an account of the circumstances of his own conception?' he has his main character ask after reading it. Hardly.

In fact, Johnston's main character is not even the main character. Devlin Stead is a flat, one-dimensional figure, who draws little sympathy from the reader. What is more, he seems never to be doing anything, only witnessing everything. The main character of the book is clearly Frederick Cook. Devlin Stead exists as a mere literary device for the sole purpose of allowing the reader to observe Cook's every move and hear his inner thoughts. Unfortunately, Johnston's version of Cook is far less compelling and enigmatic than the historical Cook, for Johnston, like most, needs simple answers to Cook's seeming irreconcilable contradictions, which lie at the heart of the polar controversy.

Peary comes off even worse, as a half-mad cripple of such monstrous proportions that he would have trouble taking himself to the corner store much less the North Pole, with a nature at once amazingly simple and blandly evil. Worst of all, Johnston blurs the two fictional explorers together by imputing actual historical quotes made by Peary to Cook. Thus the fictional Cook's motivations are manifestly clear to the reader, making him no more sympathetic than the historical Peary.

Although Johnston appends a disclaimer, stating his book's 'purpose is not to answer historical questions or settle historical controversies,' he somehow fancies he has done better than that. 'The fictional resolution of it was itself a voyage of discovery: to find a plausible explanation of what happened,' he said in a recent interview. 'You wouldn't, if you were a sophisticated consumer of art, want them to photographically reproduce every detail as it happened in real life.' Any careful examination of the facts can never be completely satisfactory, he seems to say, but wholly imagined 'art' can be all fulfilling. This reminds me of a character in my book who remarks, 'Truth is cold, sober fact, not so comfortable to absorb. A lie is more palatable.' Cook knew this himself. That is why he was such a marvelous liar, why his story lives on, and why it will continue to inspire endless debate until the end of time.

Johnston says he views historical fiction as 'historical impressionism.' But even in the color splashes of Monet we can discern the Cathedral at Rouen. Liar Cook was, murderer he was not, and, although the descendents of Peary's illegitimate offspring still people the Arctic, even the Inuit admit that Cook left no one behind even there to worry over his paternity.

All of this, of course, will be lost on the reader who reads novels for escape and entertainment. But in the case of the polar controversy, art isn't better than truth or even necessary for either purpose. The facts themselves are for once really stranger than fiction, the characters still hold our fascination by the strength of their unfathomable psychologies, and the plot needs no embellishment whatsoever. In the story of the polar controversy, ironically, the truth is anything but cold, or even artless. (Robert M. Bryce, Head librarian, Montgomery College, 20200 Observation Drive, Germantown, MD 21770, USA.)

### Reference

Bryce, R.M. 1997. *Cook & Peary: the polar controversy, resolved*. Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books.

### BRIEF REVIEWS

#### PHYSICAL PRINCIPLES OF REMOTE SENSING.

Second edition. W.G. Rees. 2001. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xvi + 343 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-521-66948-0. £24.95.

DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403323186

Since the publication of the first edition of this book, remote sensing has ballooned into a subject with multi-disciplinary functions and an international purpose. Indeed, so marked is the change that the subject is almost unrecognisable from that of 10 years ago. This revision is, therefore, timely and appropriate. The book is obviously aimed at an undergraduate level.

The essential text of the book is supplemented by examples, which are interwoven into each chapter so as to give it the flow and feel of a lecture. Further, a number of problems are provided at the end of each chapter, which allow students to follow on the themes presented (that is, homework for the reader). The solutions to the numerical problems are detailed at the end of the book. Cross-referencing to other chapters is done well, as is the progression from basic background themes, such as electromagnetics, to user-related issues, such as data processing. The order of the chapters is well thought out, although GPS could have been expanded as a chapter, rather than a brief appendix.

Production costs seem to have forced the publishers to print all of the colour images (essential for a remote sensing text) at the start of the book. This is a shame, as it is the only problem affecting the flow. I would have liked more colour in more places throughout the book. On a more positive side, the black-and-white figures are very clear, numerous, and supplement the text extremely well. The emphasis of the book is on satellite remote sensing, with only brief mention of airborne techniques. I would have liked expanded discussions about radio-echo sounding and LIDAR. As these techniques are developed during the next years, perhaps the third edition will be able to include them.

This is a good book for undergraduates interested in remote sensing. The physical background is maintained well, with appropriate use of equations. I would think

that some traditional geography students may find the physics difficult and, conversely, physics students may find it less challenging. It is very difficult, however, to find a happy medium while making the book relevant to a broad readership. I, for one, will certainly recommend this book to undergraduates studying the various subjects within remote sensing.

#### SØKAPPLAND LANDSCAPE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING (SPITSBERGEN SVALBARD)/ STRUKTURA I FUNKCJONWANIE SRODOWISKA PRZYODNICZEGO SØRKAPPLANDU (SPITSBERGEN SVALBARD).

Wieslaw Ziaja and Stefan Skiba (editors). 2002. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellonskiego. 119 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 93-233-1592-2.

DOI: 10.1017/S0032247403333182

This series of five papers forms a fascinating regional monograph of the southernmost part of Spitsbergen, where Polish scientists have worked for more than two decades. It is also a tribute to Professor Zdzislaw Czeppe (see *Polar Record* 28 (167): 340; 1992), who organized the annual summer expeditions, with their interdisciplinary programmes. The Polish station in Hornsund is central in the Søkappland national park, thus providing much basic information about one of the protected areas of the archipelago. The subjects range from physical geography, especially geomorphology and pedology, to archaeology and history of the region. The correlation of data from historic sources, reconciled with their extant remains and changing physical circumstances, is a strong theme of the monograph. This is efficiently summarised in the introduction.

The concluding chapter, 'Recapitulation: influence of the twentieth-century evolution of the environment on the state of preservation of the southern part of the South Spitsbergen National Park,' analyses changes detected during the research programmes and ancillary studies to suggest what may happen to this highly significant area as climatic influences cause change. It thus provides a useful comparative representation of such problems in many polar regions. The text is in Polish and English, set in adjacent columns. There is a good series of maps and abundant well-selected illustrations, both monochrome and colour. The bibliography is comprehensive, but unfortunately there is no index.