

thorough job of making the chapters readable, though the technical content may not appeal to those not totally familiar with the subject of tectonics and Gondwana geology. However, this is not a fault of the book, but rather a feature of the complexity of the science. A comprehensive 10-page index is useful in searching for subject material in the text. Overall, the authors and editors have done their job well, bringing readers up to date on the present knowledge of this little-known part of the Antarctic plate. Although the investigators have unravelled much of the unknown or reinterpreted it, many more questions remain to be studied. I expect that a comparable conference on the subject will be forthcoming within five to ten years as more data become available. I look forward to it. I recommend the book to an audience of those interested in state-of-the-art tectonics and to instructors, who should include some of the content as required reading for graduate-level courses.

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CHILKOOT TRAIL: HERITAGE ROUTE TO THE KLONDIKE. By DAVID NEUFELD and FRANK NORRIS. Whitehorse, Yukon: Lost Moose Publishing Company and Parks Canada, 1996. x + 182 p., maps, b&w illus., bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$24.95.

Chilkoot Trail: Heritage Route to the Klondike, is a worthwhile attempt to relive the experience of the Chilkoot—a remote, seemingly inaccessible, forgotten part of our northern countries—and capture what it was before, during, and after the Klondike gold rush of 1898. David Neufeld of Parks Canada and Frank Morris of the U.S. National Park Service have brought together years of research, personal stories, myths, archival material, and photographs. The result: a tale of energetic people who came north in search of fame and fortune, and left with disappointment, riches, or a conquering spirit quenched by tackling one of the last frontiers.

To reach the Klondike, the traveller must pass through three vegetation zones: the Coastal Rainforest, the High Alpine, and the Boreal Forest. Here each zone is painted with geographical vividness that allows the reader to envision the trail during the gold rush. The authors then recount the work of Tlingit and Athapaskan Indians, whose long history of trade relations pioneered the coast-to-interior trails. The human side of the picture becomes clear as the dynamic of the white man's encounter with yet another Native culture unfolds. Well before the Klondike saga there were Natives, and

after it is all over, they are still there, but unchanged by their menial roles as packers during the actual rush. The presence and impact of the gold rush did succeed, however, in altering the Natives' harmonic relationship with the environment.

Neufeld and Morris recount how the actual stampede occurred, and walk the reader along the treacherous trail in various seasons, using many documented stories. Sidebars with snippets of information and photographs from an era when photography was just coming to the forefront enrich the passage and bring it to life. In time, as the discovery of gold in Dawson Creek was followed by the brief stampede and the building of the railway, the trail quickly rose and fell as a landmark in history. The authors introduce us to the political and historical reality of settling international boundaries, the role of the North-West Mounted Police in ensuring the safety of thousands of prospectors, and the bickering which occurred at all political levels. Finally, the authors describe what happened to the towns, the people, and the trail after the gold rush. Eventually, quieter times returned with the added dimension of the presence of the white man.

This book comes out of a love for the Chilkoot Trail, what it has offered in the past, and what it still has to offer to the tourist today. It makes the potential hiker appreciate what has gone before and what impact he can have. The photographs bring an appreciation of the hardships experienced by those pioneers. The research highlights the skills and entrepreneurship of the First Nations clans who opened the trail well before 1898.

Well produced and well worth the time it takes to read, this book would make a great coffee-table gift for all ages and professions. It is highly recommended for the readers who propose to take the trip into the Chilkoot Trail area during its 100th anniversary next year. It would make every facet of the visit more enjoyable and provide a good keepsake of our link with the past.

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ROBERT PEARY & MATTHEW HENSON AT THE NORTH POLE. By WILLIAM E. MOLETT, Lt. Col. USAF (Ret.). Frankfort, Kentucky: Elkhorn Press, 1996. vii + 123 p., b&w illus., bib., appendices. Hardbound. US\$19.95.

In 1988 William Molett, a very knowledgeable navigator with the U.S. Air Force, picked up a copy of the *National Geographic* magazine in which Wally Herbert backed down on his support for Robert E. Peary's claim to reach the North Pole. Peary's position was that he did not need a sextant to find the geographic position of the North Pole. Molett agrees with Peary, while Herbert (1988) did not. As a result, Molett became interested in the Peary–Cook controversy concerning the polar claim and who had in fact been the first man to arrive at the geographic North Pole. The author vigorously

defends Robert E. Peary's claim to being the first human to arrive at the Pole on 6 April 1909. He believes that Peary reached the Pole by adapting Inuit ways of travelling and overcoming the challenges of the cold temperatures. He took Inuit drivers and igloo builders and dressed himself and his men in the Inuit manner.

Molett has extensive background as a navigator of polar flights and has published and taught in this field. He takes great pains in analyzing the background and credentials of Robert Peary and Matthew Henson and their own records of polar and related work prior to their final assault on the Pole. Molett puts the whole expedition in its historical and scientific context, describing the work of contemporaries in both northern and southern polar expeditions. A fair amount of attention is devoted to the attempts at reaching the Pole of Fridtjof Nansen and Umberto Cagni and comparisons of their work with Peary's. In the three concluding chapters, Molett discusses Peary's sledging ability and navigational methods and Matthew Henson's experience and ability as a travelling companion. The author makes a good case for Peary's use of Inuit techniques in sledging to the Pole. He defends the honour and reliability of Henson, who was a loyal and faithful servant to Peary throughout the period of Peary's expeditions. Whether Peary was able to dead reckon due north along the 70th meridian is subject to much controversy because of publications by Wally Herbert (1989) and the Navigation Foundation (Davies, 1990). Molett carefully examines the evidence as he sees it in his defense of Peary.

Unfortunately the author is not as objective as one would hope. From the jacket to the closing pages, he expresses his feeling that the name of Peary has been slighted by Frederick A. Cook and this slight must be vindicated. He promises not to include in his discussion any mention of Cook. Why not? If Cook was a fake, he merely could have included his techniques of travel in the general discussion; he could have judged the credibility of the two Natives who served him; or he could have put his navigational methods into the context of the discussion. Instead, we find this statement on page 61, before he really gets warmed up in his presentation: "Dr. Frederick Cook was most probably the first and only person to commit the reprehensible act of submitting false sextant readings to claim a farthest north." Molett concludes on page 98: "While it cannot be proved that Peary's sextant shots are genuine, there exists much evidence that they are."

The book, as a rather defensive attempt to defend Peary, might do him more harm than good. On the inside cover, we find a rather simple map, which includes the label "Arctic Ocean." Later, Mr. Arthur R. Hinks, Royal Geographical Society lecturer in surveying and cartography, Cambridge University, is referred to as "Mr. hinks." The language is simple and in many cases the arguments are not well fleshed out.

Would I recommend this book? As a teenager who, in 1966, spent his first of many summers at the Arctic Institute of North America's base on Devon Island, I got

hooked on this debate. I visited Cape Sparbo where Cook supposedly wintered over. I read the biographies of both explorers and supporting works. Since then 30 years have lapsed, and I think we are no closer to the truth of the matter. And that's the beauty of it. The secret will remain hidden to us all. It is fun to revisit, ruminate the facts, and get caught up in a rather interesting piece of history, but I'm not so sure this book adds a lot to the debate.

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