

manager, employee of Canadian Airways, and government administrator. His wife, Barbara, has performed the final editing of her husband's memoirs and seen them through press.

Such recollections of life in the Canadian North are currently popular in today's book trade, but *Rebels, Rascals & Royalty* clearly distinguishes itself from most. Hunt's varied and influential experiences allow his narrative a comprehensive and knowledgeable scope often lacking in the genre, and the book's style enables the reader to filter that immense variety of experience through the warmly revealed personality of LACO Hunt, a man with an admirable mixture of good sense, good humour, and good taste.

Hunt's affair with the North began at age 19, when, in 1928, he crossed the Atlantic to serve the Hudson's Bay Company. As apprentice, he was moved about considerably — from Monowan to Weymont to Bersimis to Romaine in Quebec, from Quebec to Fort Chipewyan in northern Alberta, and from Fort Chipewyan to Fort Simpson, Aklavik, and Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories. Such transience no doubt proved difficult for Hunt, but it produced the great breadth of experience that is the very pulse of *Rebels, Rascals & Royalty*.

Nor is Hunt's breadth of experience limited to geography. From 1928, when he first came to Canada, until 1967, when he moved to Ottawa to serve as executive secretary to the Advisory Committee on Northern Development, LACO Hunt lived for only a few years — from 1939 to 1945 — on the "outside," a period he spent back in England and in the military. Hunt's experience, then, encompasses over 30 years of residence in the Canadian North and another decade of treating northern issues from the federal capital. The simple arithmetic sum of Hunt's years of northern involvement amounts to a substantial commitment, but of even greater significance is the historical era spanned by those years.

Hunt witnessed — from a remarkable vantage point — the coming of age of northern Canada. His early experiences brought him into first-hand contact with both white and native residents who were as yet untouched by the advent of twentieth-century technology and culture, and Hunt remained in the North during the years when such isolation and innocence gave way to a new society. That new society, of course, was shaped by the same forces that World War I had wrought in North American society earlier in the century.

Without question, the development of aviation was of profound influence. In *Rebels, Rascals & Royalty* the reader observes the growing and shaping force of air travel on northern Canada as the airplane outstrips the use of steam on the waterways and the use of dogs, sleds, and snowshoes in the bush and on the tundra. But this transition takes on the qualities of an experience for the reader, rather than of a cerebral understanding of historical developments, because Hunt — serving as the reader's vision here — is a participant in that transition, beginning with his sled journeys from Monowan for the winter mail packet in the 1920s, and stretching to his Grand Tours of the North escorting dignitaries from one arctic landing strip to another in the 1970s. The reader's sense that he is present at the scene is further enhanced when he meets the human personalities behind this major transition in communications — the new breed of bush pilots, such as Leigh Brintnell, Punch Dickens, "Wop" May, and Matt Berry.

We gain a similarly tactile grasp of social as well as technological developments. Education in the North, for example, receives a brief but pointed focus. At one point we witness the rivalry between Catholic and Anglican parish schools at Fort Simpson, but as we read on, we observe the total elimination of such secular education in the face of a vast and amorphous educational machine conceived and constructed in Ottawa. Although Hunt's criticism of the government-sponsored schools is severe, he is equally blunt in voicing the shortcomings of the old parish schools. In fact, Hunt assesses blame quite candidly throughout the book, especially wherever native people are the victims of decisions made on the "outside." He writes, for example, of overly zealous RCMP recruits who rigidly adhere to their Regina-based training in a society whose values have been shaped far from the police academy. Of equal concern are those religious leaders, educators, and bureaucrats who carry on their work while re-

maining oblivious to the specialized needs of the remarkable social environment around them. Whether one agrees with Hunt's opinions matters little; what does matter is that he always bases them on his solid knowledge of northern Canada.

*Rebels, Rascals & Royalty* is ultimately a book about change. And as the North changes, so must the book. The final pages of Hunt's memoirs concern the period spent in Ottawa, and the entire focus seems to shift. Throughout most of the book, when Hunt describes an experience or an individual, some distinctively northern quality emerges from the description. But in the final section, the attention falls away from what is indigenously and uniquely northern, and falls instead on the idiosyncracies of a few dignitaries as they tour the North under Hunt's guidance. The reader sees too little of the North and too much of diplomatic behaviour. When true northerners appear, they are in attendance at formal receptions for visiting heads of state, and their behaviour is stiffly formal, more an imitation of "outside" ceremony and ritual than a candid response that is distinctively northern.

As well, in the final pages of Hunt's book, issues take precedence over personalities. Questions of government policy fill pages once alive with the men and women those policies will affect. My personal preferences are strongly for the earlier pages of the book, pages that tell of life in the North when it was clearly distinguishable from life anywhere else. But perhaps such romantic and outdated notions about northern Canada are precisely what Hunt wishes to dispell, for the modern North of LACO Hunt has all the complexity of life on the "outside." To conceive differently of the North is to ignore the incredible change that has taken place in the past three or four decades.

Richard C. Davis  
Department of English  
University of Calgary  
Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
T2N 1N4

THE LAST KINGS OF THULE, by JEAN MALAURIE, translated from the French by ADRIENNE FOULKE. New York: E.P. Dutton, Inc., 1982. Original title: *Les derniers rois de Thulé*, 1976. 489 p., maps, illus., index, bib. US\$25.75.

Jean Malaurie, now director of the French Centre for Arctic Studies, was originally trained as a geomorphologist, and this epic account of his 1950-51 stay with the remote Eskimos of Thule reflects this emphasis. In its descriptive passages on subsistence, travel, capes, peninsulars, and the Eskimo relationship to the environment and to the hunting spirits, it is the geomorphologist speaking, and it is a strongly personal account reflecting a concern for human rights. His objective: to record perhaps for the last time the unique but slowly disappearing culture of 300 top-of-the-world Eskimos who, as late as 1818, possessed no driftwood and no metals.

It is perhaps on account of the historical imperative that the work acquires its greatest value, but it is also an anthropological study, a travelogue, and an extraordinary adventure story. Not being all things to all people, the book shows certain weaknesses, mainly a lack of anthropological precision in the collection and analysis of data on kinship and cultural personality. This data is nonetheless highly interesting and often a dramatic eye-witness account of feuds, violence, wife-beatings, sexual practices, hunting incidents, ritual, endurance, and human courage in the face of extreme danger.

The book is in four parts: Part I: Greenland is a Green land, Part II: The Kings of Thule, Part III: One Thousand Miles of Exploration, and Part IV: The Iron Age. The first comprises but 12 pages and concerns mainly the Danes. The second comprises 230 pages and is informally ethnographic. The third comprises 150 pages and describes the author's pioneer expeditions and exploration. The fourth describes the coming of the \$800-million U.S. air base.

The author is obviously well read in the works of Birket-Smith, Holtved, Peary, Rasmussen, and other explorers and makes frequent interesting comparisons and analogies to their observations. His journeys to Inglefield Land, Washington Land, and Ellesmere Island are the more productive because they build on what has gone before. The hazards of broken sleds, frostbite, and dangerous terrain make epic reading.

The author is a perceptive participant-observer, noting Eskimo preoccupation with taboo, the supernatural, personal honor, and hunting ritual. But this is no "objective" anthropological report. Malaurie obviously made close friends in numerous Eskimo kin groups, recruiting buddies, girlfriends, hunting partners, and expedition companions, as if he were one them.

The most thought-provoking aspect of the book is the deliberate contrasts stressed, by the author, between the Eskimo struggle against the environment (the hard-won victories, thrift and ingenuity with regard to meager resources) and the erosive comforts brought by white contact as epitomized by the influence of the U.S. air base. Malaurie likens this metamorphosis from an egalitarian, sharing society to a plutocratic, materialistic society to a microcosm of the history of the industrialized world, with its wage-base economy. Classless boat owners turn into exploiters for profit. Here the author takes a thoughtful and provocative view of the loss of traditional subsistence lifestyle and hence the loss of cultural identity and the cultural pride of an independent people. In 1950 Siorapaluk was producing more than it consumed; in 1967 it was producing only one-quarter of what it consumed. In a typical passage, Malaurie states, "In our modern world, the fate of this handful of men may not seem important. Yet what is at stake is crucial: is not each of these Eskimos the custodian of human capital, of a fund of experience, knowledge, and traditions handed down through generations?" (p.415).

The book is excellently and handsomely produced, the photographs record a bygone era. It is strongly recommended both to students of arctic societies and to the general public.

*Thomas F. Johnston*  
*Department of Ethno-Music*  
*University of Alaska*  
*Fairbanks, Alaska 99701*  
*U.S.A.*

## BOOKS RECEIVED

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