

It is always difficult to review a collection of essays, especially when it is as eclectic as this one. In the end perhaps the most one can say is that, not surprisingly, the quality of the contributions varies. It is fortunate that the one essay that deals directly with Cook in Alaska, by Glyndwr Williams, is well written and tightly presented. At the other end of the scale is David Waters' windy piece on "Navigational Problems in Captain Cook's Day" that deals with everything except the matter in hand. Most of the papers lie between the extremes. They provide a great deal of information about the subject, but do not advance any radically new interpretations. There are some errors for the reviewer to carp about. It is incorrectly asserted in the preface, for example, that Cook prevented scurvy on his ships. In fact, the importance of Cook's contribution to naval medicine has been somewhat diminished by recent scholarship. This point is later recognized by Wayne M. Myers in his essay on "Cook, the Physician", but then he concludes with a facile and unnecessary defence of Cook's work in this area. In the section dealing with the native peoples there are two scholarly papers and then individual representatives of the indigenous peoples are asked to speak for themselves. It is interesting to note that, while there are clearly historic grievances among the original people of Alaska, on the evidence presented here the clash of opinion between the two races is not nearly as sharp as it was during the bicentennial celebrations in British Columbia.

The text of this book is greatly enhanced by the numerous illustrations. It is a pity, however, that it is produced in a form that makes it very difficult to read.

In the past Cook scholarship has been dominated by work on the south Pacific. The value of volumes such as this one is that they bring to our attention that fact that during his third voyage Cook opened up another, very different, Pacific world in the north. For this reason *Exploration in Alaska* makes a useful contribution to Cook studies.

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**THE EXPLORATION OF NORTHERN CANADA 500-1920: A Chronology.** By ALAN COOKE and CLIVE HOLLAND. The Arctic History Press, 18 Waterman Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4B 3G3, 1978. 549 p., 26 maps. \$50.00.

Cooke and Holland's *The Exploration of Northern Canada* is modelled after Roberts' *Chronological List of Arctic Expeditions*. It consists of: Chronology of Events between 500 and 1920 AD, 348 pages; Roster of Men's Names, 95 pages; Bibliography, 56 pages; Index, 42 pages; and 26 maps. The entries, laid out from left to right, comprise the nature of each expedition, its affiliation, its leader and frequently senior members, ships (or sledges), the date in bold face on the left or right hand margin, the text, and the source of the information. The text is brief but explicit, giving essential details, dates and events. These are adequate to refresh one's memory. Entry to events can be made directly by year, the Index, or the Roster of Men's Names. The reviewer over the past year has checked entries randomly as names, places, or events arose in research and found the contents to reflect accurately and completely the event recorded. The Roster of Men's Names lists the names of men appearing in the text, their ship or event, and date, and is helpful in quickly ascertaining dates if the name is known.

The contents of the book, in preliminary form, appear in *Polar Record* as follows:

May 1970. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. I. Early times to 1670.  
Vol. 15(95):169-183.

September 1970. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. II. 1670 - 1713.  
Vol. 15(96):317-329.

January 1971. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. III. 1713 - 1763.  
Vol. 15(97):503-522.

May 1971. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. IV. 1763 - 1789.  
Vol. 15(98):699-721.

September 1971. Chronological list of expeditions and historical

events in northern Canada. V. 1790 - 1821.

Vol. 15(99):893-920.

January 1972. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. VI. 1821 - 1845.

Vol. 16(100):41 - 61.

May 1972. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. VII. 1846 - 1854.

Vol. 16(101):235-260.

September 1972. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. VIII. 1853 - 1880.

Vol. 16(102):383-409.

January 1973. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. IX. 1881 - 1896.

Vol. 16(103):559-577.

May 1973. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. X. 1896 - 1902.

Vol. 16(104):707-722.

September 1973. Chronological list of expeditions and historical events in northern Canada. XI. 1902 - 1909.

Vol. 16(105):827-846.

The book should be considered indispensable to students of northern Canadian history, as it provides a chronology of events, reference access, and a feeling for the shifting definition of "northern". I regret the limited edition (1000 copies) of the publication because it should have been published inexpensively and made readily available to teachers of Canadian history in high schools and universities. This, I hope, would have been more in keeping with the objectives of the National Museum of Canada which supported the project. In spite of this criticism, the authors are to be commended for producing an accurate and timely document which should be on the shelves of all those interested in Canadian history and exploration of northern areas.

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**THE POLAR ICE (1815); THE NORTH POLE (1828).** William Scoresby, F.R.S. Caedmon of Whitby Press, 9 John Street, Whitby, Yorks, YO21 3ET, England, 1980. 88 p. £7.95.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, the Wernerian Society of Edinburgh had a small but select membership which included none of the "scientific officers" of the Royal Navy, not even John Ross, who was the best educated and most active of them. But it did include William Scoresby, Jr., son of a well-known whaling master, who contributed a number of papers over the years. One of those here reprinted, *On the Greenland or Polar Ice*, read in 1815, was the result of his experience and careful observation and a preamble to his greater work of 1820. In this paper he dealt with the physical properties of ice and the nature and movements of the pack ice and bergs, in effect giving the sailing directions for his day. Looking back, the interesting part is the section *On the approximation towards the Poles, and on the possibility of reaching the North Pole*, in which he suggested that the Pole might be reached over the pack ice with reindeer or dogs, specially-built sledges and equipment.

In 1818, when the Admiralty started its series of arctic voyages, it employed officers without experience in pack ice, rejecting Scoresby's offer of his services; all the same, he maintained a dignified silence over the rebuff. In 1827 Parry made an unsuccessful attempt to reach the Pole from Spitsbergen. In the following year Scoresby prepared a paper to show why Parry's expedition was doomed to failure before it started, through the excessive weight of his sledges and boats, the wrong form of traction, and the choices of the wrong time of the year and the wrong meridian. Without referring to Parry's limited arctic experience, Scoresby mentioned his own 21 years of observing ice in the Greenland fishery, a measure of the loss to arctic exploration through the neglect of Scoresby by the Government.

These two articles are not ordinarily easy to find, so it is useful to have them reprinted in facsimile.

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