

place does the story of the death of Toni Kurz on the Eiger have in a book about Canada's mountains?)

The photographs are beautiful in this book and it will certainly be appreciated by anyone who is interested in the mountains. It is a great book to pick up and leaf through, but it could have been so much more.

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BERING'S VOYAGES WHITHER AND WHY; RAYMOND H. FISHER; *University of Washington Press; Seattle and London; 1978; 217 xii pp., maps, appendices, bibliography, index; \$17.95.*

On June 4, 1741, Captain Vitus Bering in *St. Peter* and Captain Aleksei Chirikov in *St. Paul* sailed east from the Kamchatka port of Avatcha. The ships became separated, but by the time Chirikov had returned to Kamchatka in *St. Paul* and the survivors of Bering's crew had struggled back to Siberian shores, both in the autumn of 1741, these officers of the Russian Navy and their crews had accomplished what is traditionally accepted as the European discovery of Alaska. Until publication of Professor Fisher's *Bering's Voyages*, the two-volume work of F. A. Golder (*Bering's Voyages, An Account of the Efforts of the Russians to Determine the Relation of Asia and America*, American Geographical Society Research Series No. 1, New York, 1922, reprint Octagon Books, New York, 1968) has been the most authoritative English language treatment of the purpose and conduct of the 1741 voyage.

Golder's view, shared by many, was that the 1741 sailing was undertaken to more definitively answer the question "are Asia and America joined?", the basis for a 1728 Bering expedition, and one which Golder felt had not been answered to the satisfaction of the Russian government.

Fisher's *Bering's Voyages* challenges that position by citing evidence that the separation question had been answered by the 1648 voyage of Semen Dezhnev and then examining with thoroughness and detail whether or not the results of Dezhnev's investigations were known to those chartering Bering's explorations; and then, in successive chapters, "The Intended Route and Destination", "The Evidence from the Voyage", "Bering's Proposals", and "The Second Kamchatka Expedition: Plans and Objectives". A final chapter concludes that the purpose of Bering's 1728 voyage was to reconnoiter the coast of North America and that the purpose of the 1741 voyage was to establish Russian sovereignty in northwest America.

Dr. Fisher is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of California at Los Angeles, author of *The Russian Fur Trade, 1550-1770* (University of California Press, 1943), several articles having to do with the settlement and exploration of Siberia and northwest America, and a guide to the records of the Russian-American Company held in the National Archives of the United States. His years of study have resulted in a publication which will require rethinking of many previously held opinions about attitudes of the Russian government toward exploration and settlement on the North American continent.

It is disappointing that the care which the author devoted to his scholarship is not evidenced in the printing of *Bering's Voyages*, for this reviewer's copy, at least, was marred by having pages 180, 181, 184 and 185 blank. This destroys the usefulness of Appendix I (Bering's Account of His First Voyage) and Appendix II (Kirilov's Memorandum on the Kamchatka Expedition), and it is hoped that the publisher noted and corrected this flaw in other copies.

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THE MOSSES OF ARCTIC ALASKA; STEERE, W. C.; *Bryophytorum Bibliotheca 14, J. Cramer, Postfach 48, 3301 Lehre, West Germany; 1978; i-x, 508 pp. (DM 150, -).*

Until recently, the flora of the North American arctic was very poorly known. Not only was there an imperfect knowledge of the species that were present but, in particular, little was known of the distribution and ecology of these species. Furthermore, most publications are scattered in journal articles, many of which are hard to find or have been little publicized. Books by A. E. Porsild on the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, I. L. Wiggins and J. H. Thomas on the Alaskan Arctic Slope, and the superb flora by E. Hulten on Alaska and neighbouring Territories have gone a long way to bring together knowledge on the vascular plants but until the present book, similar treatments have not appeared on the algae, fungi, lichens and bryophytes.

The author, William Campbell Steere, is one of the best known and respected botanists in the world as evidenced by the lengthy article on his life and work that H. Crum published in *The Bryologist* in 1977 (80: 662-694). Steere devoted part of ten field seasons from 1951 to 1974 to the study of Alaskan arctic bryophytes with research staged from the Arctic Research