

his mother, his father, a sea-captain and trader, having died when Bowers was three. Emily Bowers was a deeply God-fearing lady whose religiosity was to be inherited by a son who put his Christian beliefs before all else and invariably carried the Bible in his kit. Both at school and as a cadet on the training ship *Worcester*, his short stature and beaky nose (hence the nickname) made him the potential butt of his fellows. He appears to have taken the banter well, in good part, compensating by exercising and hardening his body (witness the snow baths, taken with Wilson in Antarctica, likewise his ability to withstand extremes of temperature). The family being hard-up, Bowers opted to join the merchant navy, partly to satisfy a love of travel but also to support his mother and sisters. Subsequently he transferred to the Royal Indian Marine, his career in Burma in charge of a gunboat patrolling the Irrawaddy, followed by the pursuit of contraband smugglers in the Gulf of Oman, being well-summarized in this book. It was during this period that Bowers, an avid reader, became thrilled by Scott's *The voyage of the Discovery* and learned of Shackleton's attempt on the South Pole. Seizing upon an opportunity to widen his experience, he applied to join Scott's forthcoming British Antarctic Expedition and was accepted without interview, sight unseen. It is stated that Scott at first was 'taken aback' by Bowers' somewhat unprepossessing appearance, but any doubts as to his abilities were dispensed during the course of the long journey south on *Terra Nova*, on which Bowers displayed his talents at store-keeping and seamanship. These sterling qualities were soon to bring him to the attention of Scott, who promoted him from the ship's party to the shore party. Shortly before leaving New Zealand, Bowers demonstrated his powers of diplomacy, intervening in a battle between Kathleen Scott and her rival, Hilda Evans, regarding the latter's husband, Lieutenant Teddy Evans, and thereby helping to save the expedition from being aborted.

Further chapters that follow the fortunes of the expedition after leaving Port Chalmers cover the near sinking of the ship in a severe gale, in which Bowers displayed his customary *sang froid*, standing on the bridge alongside Scott and taking the wheel. Again we read of his organizational skills, supervising the unloading of the vessel at Cape Evans and seeing that a vast mountain of stores was safely ferried to the shore. The accidental sinking of one of three motor-sledges was due to a miscalculation by Scott. There follow a number of chapters covering the events preceding the departure of the Pole party on 1 November 1911. Bowers' part on the sledge journey to One Ton Depot is well-known. On it he proved himself a competent handler of ponies and a tough puller of sledges, leading Scott to describe him as 'a positive wonder. I never met such a sledge traveller.' Bowers' reaction to the news of Amundsen's presence at the Bay of Whales is not recorded. An ingrained distrust of foreigners would perhaps have been counterbalanced by his sense of fair play. Further talents were to reveal themselves during the long, dark winter months spent in the hut at Cape

Evans, where he was busily employed in working on rations for the Pole party, helping the scientists with their work, contributing poetry to *The South Polar Times*, and generally succeeding in keeping up morale with his unflinching cheerfulness. A whole chapter is devoted to the famous winter journey to Cape Crozier undertaken by Bowers, Cherry-Garrard, and Wilson to collect samples of the eggs of the emperor penguin, carried out in almost total darkness and in record low temperatures. The fact that they succeeded was almost entirely due to Bowers' inexhaustible stamina and capacity to survive.

Finally the author follows Bowers as he accompanied the fateful trek to the Pole and the return to the Ice Barrier, which culminated in the deaths of P.O. Evans, Captain Oates, and, finally, only 11 miles from One Ton Depot, Wilson, Scott, and lastly, according to hard evidence, Bowers himself. In his journal of these events, Bowers has no criticism to make of Scott's decisions. His interpretation of his own selection by Scott as the fifth member of the party planned for four is that Scott chose Wilson for England, Evans for Wales, Oates for Ireland, and Bowers for Scotland. Once at the Pole, confronted by Amundsen's priority there, Bowers, eschewing melodramatics, simply states in his journal that he is sad that they have been forestalled by the Norwegians, and that 'I am glad that we have done it by good British manhaulage.' Bowers has nothing of substance to say of the deaths of Evans and Oates, only in a last letter does he mention them by name.

In his final chapters the author is much concerned to lay the full blame for the catastrophe on Scott. Criticism there must be, but Lagerbom is apeing the iconoclasts when he accuses Scott of deliberately writing his journal with one eye on public opinion, attributing misfortunes to bad luck and the weather. And to suggest, as he does, that Scott privily doctored his companions' drinks with opium so that all three might die together stretches the imagination to the breaking point.

The concluding chapter deals largely and in a similar vein with the making of heroes touching on the sanctification of the British 'hero' at the expense of the Norwegian 'villain,' none of which has much to do with the subject matter. On the whole this is a useful life of Bowers, but much more work on original sources needs to be done before we can expect something more definitive. (Harry King, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

**PALAEO-ESKIMO SETTLEMENTS IN SCORESBY SUND, NORTHEAST GREENLAND.** Hanne Tuborg and Birge Sandell. 1999. Copenhagen: Danish Polar Center. 149 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 87-90369-35-1.

The authors of this volume are no strangers to the archaeology of the Scoresby Sund fjord region. This survey of Palaeo-Eskimo settlements significantly enlarges the database primarily recorded in *The Palaeo-Eskimo cultures of Greenland* (Grønow 1996), which had been preceded by a report on the archaeology of the last Thule

culture in the same area, published in 1991 (Sandell and Sandell 1991). This latest volume reports on work undertaken between 1989 and 1995, during which time the authors turned their attention to the location and recording of the Palaeo-Eskimo sites of the region.

The book begins by describing the Scoresby Sund fjord area and in particular draws attention to the resource base available to the Eskimo. The second chapter documents previous investigations of Palaeo-Eskimo settlements in the area. The brevity of this chapter reflects the limited work previously undertaken on the early occupation of this region, therefore effectively making the case for the value of the investigations recorded here. The main section of the book documents the evidence for settlement recovered from the 27 sites investigated. Most of the sites cluster around the mouth of the fjord, but a few sites are described from other areas, including Hurry Fjord, the south coast of Jameson Land, Sydkap, and Hekla Havn on Danmarks Ø. This distribution of sites reflects the opportunities presented to the authors to travel in the region, and is clearly related to the favoured hunting locations of contemporary Ittoqqortoormiit (Scoresbysund) hunters.

The book is a record of the evidence found. At each location the surface archaeology is described and the recovered artefacts grouped, listed, and discussed. Numerous photographs help to give a feel for the landscape, and the text is supplemented by an extensive range of site plans and drawings of artefacts. In many ways this volume should be considered an interim report, recording sites in close proximity to current favoured hunting locations. The authors state that they have now moved their area of operation into the less accessible inner fjords, and their research in this area will produce a more comprehensive picture of Palaeo-Eskimo activity in the whole region, which will, hopefully, in due course, be reported in a subsequent volume.

The evidence for Palaeo-Eskimo settlement varies from the compelling to the insubstantial. At some sites, such as Røde Hytte on Jameson Land, the authors had time to carry out a more extensive survey, and the results are spectacular. As well as the identification of the features, a large number of artefacts were recovered, including two endblades, unique to Greenland and with the nearest parallels in Alaska. At the other end of the scale, a site near Kap Hope, Aamarsuit Nuuat, was found to be in such a poor state of preservation that drawing any substantial conclusions from the limited evidence was difficult. That this task of recording is an urgent priority is demonstrated by reports on recent damage to sites both from natural causes, such as ice movement at Narsakajik, and human interference, such as boat repairing and road building at Ittoqqortoormiit. Little can be done about damage from natural causes, but with so many of these important sites located near favoured hunting sites it would be reassuring to know that the local community was involved in the recording process and that opportunities to undertake a programme of education were being sought.

The book concludes with a useful discussion in which the authors resist any temptation to overstate their case. They are conscious that the evidence that they have found raises more questions than it answers. They provide frequent pointers to further areas for research, and at the end they identify four issues to which future investigations should be directed. Although the extent of Palaeo-Eskimo activity in the fjord complex can be ascertained by a programme of continuing recording of surface features and other finds, issues of chronology, cultural change, and the relationships between cultures can probably only be answered through excavation. The data collected by the authors and documented in this volume (as well as the hoped-for sequel) will enable sound decisions to be made regarding future archaeological research priorities in the area. (Robert David, Department of History, St Martin's College, Lancaster LA1 3JD.)

#### References

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**THE SEARCH FOR THE NORTH WEST PASSAGE.** Ann Savours. 1999. London: Chatham Publishing. x + 342 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-86176-059-0. £25.00.

When I spotted *The search for the North West Passage* in a bookstore in Greenwich, I wondered what had motivated someone to write yet another book on a subject that some would say has already been thoroughly discussed. Ann Savours (biographer of the famous polar ship *Discovery*) explains in her introductory remarks that her career has been connected closely with polar matters, that she has been influenced by other scholars in the field, and that having already written a few chapters for a book that was never published (owing to the death of the principal author) she decided to expand her contribution and publish it in this form, rather than let it go to waste. But what about the book? How does it differ from its many predecessors, such as *The North-West Passage* by John Brown (1860), *Life of Franklin and the North-West Passage* by Albert Markham (1891), *In quest of the North West Passage* by Leslie Neatby (1958), *The Arctic grail: the quest for the North West Passage and the North Pole* by Pierre Berton (1988), or *Across the top of the world: the quest for the Northwest Passage* by James Delgado (1999), to name but a few?

The book covers a very long period. It begins with the voyages of Martin Frobisher in 1576–78 and ends with those of Henry Larsen in 1941–44. It therefore presents a complete picture of European attempts to trace a sea-level route from the Atlantic to the Pacific, poleward of the North American continent. Indeed, the book does much