

what to include. After all, the sub-Antarctic probably isn't large enough a topic to rate its own encyclopedia, and these topics will clearly be of interest to the kind of person who will read an Antarctic encyclopedia. That stated, the list of sub-Antarctic islands is incomplete, and I could discern no specific criteria for what makes an island worthy of inclusion here. One would expect to see all the islands south of the Polar Front present, and so they are. However, for those north of the convergence there seems to be a randomness as to what's in and what's not. Islands like Antipodes and Bounty are not listed, while more northerly islands like Gough, Amsterdam, and Crozet are. The Falkland Islands, which are closer to Antarctica than all of the above mentioned archipelagos and which have many direct links to Antarctic exploration and science, do not rate an entry. Perhaps this is due to the presence there of a resident population, making them unique among southerly island groups.

The length of individual entries varies greatly, and one assumes that the size of an entry is more subjective than simply a testament to the relative value of a topic. For example, more space is devoted to the 'Shackleton Range' than to 'Shackleton, Ernest.'

The list of contributors is extensive and cosmopolitan. As a result, the book has a truly international feel to it and generally avoids sliding into the bias of any one nation. One exception to this is in the descriptions of 'Field camps' and 'Base technology,' which have a perhaps unavoidable British slant. Very occasionally a contributor also lets slip his borecentric prejudices by including the redundant adjective 'austral' when describing something. For example, if one is discussing summer in Antarctica, there is no need to qualify it as the 'austral' summer. Each entry includes a few references and suggested further reading that will allow the deeply curious to pursue more information elsewhere. Mostly, the works cited are the primary literature or other peer-reviewed sources that are likely to be reliable. It was therefore a surprise to read the 'chinstrap penguin' entry and find that two out of the seven references were non-scientific books (*Mitsuaki Iwago's penguins* and Ron Naveen's *Waiting to fly*). A reader wishing to understand how people and politics work in Antarctica will be pleased to find not only the complete texts of the Antarctic Treaty and the Environmental Protocol, but also descriptions of 35 different national Antarctic programmes. The role of women in Antarctica is specifically discussed in two separate entries over 10 pages ('Women in Antarctic science' and 'Women in Antarctica: from companions to professionals'), but the work of various Antarctic women is also very much a part of the fabric of many of the entries. The recent increase in the popularity of adventure tourism in Antarctica also rates an entry, although more depth here would have been desirable. For example, what better place than this volume to include a list of everyone who has travelled overland to the South Pole?

The index is a thing of beauty. It clocks in at a massive 86 pages and is splendidly and precisely detailed. A good index is the backbone of a successful reference work and

those who spent the considerable time required to do this task thoroughly should rightly congratulate themselves on time well spent. From this index one can find any number of ways to track down needed information.

The book includes some excellent appendices, with the novel treat of such things as a list of the journals that publish Antarctic work. Unfortunately, the maps included are not up to the same high standards as the text and are perhaps the biggest shortcoming of this book. Not only would the book benefit from the inclusion of many more maps, those already here could show more detail. Adding colour would be the simplest way to improve them. For example, the chart showing the courses of early explorers is a rat's nest of not-easily-distinguished black and grey lines. Different coloured lines would make this map usable. The inclusion of more photographs would also improve the usefulness of the book. It is rare to find an organism entry that includes pictures, although the editor's apparent love of 'Tardigrades' means that this entry is nicely illustrated. A lack of colour or photographs in the production of a book is often a budgetary constraint, and this shows in other ways as well. The overall production value seems moderate. The pages are printed on good-quality paper, and the text is clean and very readable, but the feel of the binding after just a few weeks of handling and cross-referencing does not suggest a robust future. Time will tell. I found just one typographical error (page 316, where the latitude of Iles Crozet is incorrect). This book retails for £285, and for that price, most buyers will expect higher production quality. But should that stop you from buying this book? Absolutely not, for it is a clearly written, authoritative treasure trove of up-to-date information on all aspects of Antarctica, presented in a highly organised fashion. (Peter W. Carey, 8 Estuary Road, Christchurch 7, New Zealand.)

### References

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### DANGEROUS PASSAGE: ISSUES IN THE ARCTIC.

- Gerard Kenney. 2006. Toronto: Natural Heritage Books. xii + 211 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 1-897045-13-1. \$Can24.95; \$US19.95.  
doi:10.1017/S0032247407006821

This is an unusual book. Effectively its intention is to alert the Canadian government and people to the dangers posed to the nation when navigation through the Northwest Passage becomes easier due to the decline in ice cover because of global warming. The writer suggests that, as the United States has not ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and, hence, does not

accept Canadian sovereignty over the various waterways of the Passage, Canada is vulnerable in the event of a rise in oil prices to the use of the Passage by tankers, with all the political and environmental dangers inherent in that. It is, in effect, a call to action: 'Canada must take steps immediately to ensure that she is not caught unawares on this subject. It is already quite late in the game' (page 5).

But this only covers the last section of the book, from pages 163 to 196. Before this there are two sections that seem more or less unconnected with the main thrust of the book save that they centre on aspects of the history of the Northwest Passage, and touch on a large number of others. These are Roald Amundsen's *Gjøa* expedition of 1903–06 and Henry Larsen's voyages through the passage in *St Roch* in 1940–42 and 1944. Moreover, and adding to the oddity of the book, these vary greatly in length. On Amundsen we have approximately 100 pages. On Larsen, whose activities were far more related to the putative point of the volume, namely the assertion of Canadian sovereignty, and whose story is a good deal more complex, we have only approximately 55 pages.

The section on the Amundsen expedition is fairly conventional. It starts with a chapter entitled 'The Silk Road and the Strait of Anian,' which is self-explanatory, and then continues with an account of the early life of Amundsen, leading up to the *Gjøa* expedition. This includes, of course, a treatment of the *Belgica* expedition. The account of *Gjøa* is also conventional but the author does stress that this was, in part, a scientific expedition, since Amundsen devoted great attention to magnetic studies during the course of it. This was because the expedition spent considerable time in the vicinity of the Magnetic North Pole. He also refers at length to the question of the relations between Amundsen's men and the local Inuit. He quotes (twice) Amundsen's comment that his 'sincerest wish' was 'that civilization may never reach them.' This was despite the fact that if Amundsen had really meant this, he would have removed himself and *Gjøa* from the harbour in which the meetings with the Inuit took place as soon as possible and not remained there for a second winter, during which a large group of Inuit settled in the vicinity of the ship. Moreover, he would not have taken Manni, a young Inuit from Gjoa Haven, with the aim of transporting him to Norway 'to receive an education.' In the event, the unfortunate Manni drowned in July 1906 while *Gjøa* was iced in at Herschel Island.

The section on Henry Larsen is informative. This reviewer is always surprised to be reminded that, when Larsen was confirmed as Captain of *St Roch*, he held the lowly rank of Constable in the RCMP, and was only promoted Corporal on 1 April 1929. The treatment of the great voyages of *St Roch* through the Northwest Passage under Larsen's command is probably the best part of the book. In particular, the account of the death of 'Frenchy' Chartrand and Larsen's great journey to summon Father Henri Pierre to officiate at his funeral is very interesting, and demonstrates, if demonstration were required, the

great leadership qualities shown by Larsen during his command of the vessel.

With the death of Larsen at 65 in 1964, then holding the rank of Superintendent, we are pitched straight into the politics of the twenty-first century, and the book descends into being a polemic.

There are four chapters on the threat to Canada posed by global warming and the opening up of a northern sea route through the islands of the north. These are unlikely to convey anything new to readers of *Polar Record*, but there are some interesting extracts from speeches made by politicians. Revealing the political agenda behind the book, there is also a 'Suggested Non-Inclusive List of Issues to Be Addressed in a Master Fundamental Plan under the proposed Canadian Northwest Passage Commission.' These include the development of an 'ironclad' legal case for Canadian Arctic sovereignty, the development of plans for the surveillance of the Passage, the procurement of icebreakers, and so forth.

Unfortunately, the book is littered with examples of poor style and proof reading. We have on page 37, for example, the fact that Amundsen 'lost no time' in issuing an order and, in the same sentence, that Ristvedt 'lost no time' in complying with it. On the next page, a sentence ends in a comma only to continue indented on the next line. On page 49, we have King William Island and Prince William Island in the same paragraph. Spitzbergen is Spitzbergen throughout, and, on page 101, we are informed that it is now Svalbard, except in the index where it becomes Sualberg. On the same page Bjørnøya becomes Bjfrnfy and in the notes on page 196, the Deutsche Seewarte Institute is the German Navel Observatory!

The book is well presented with useful maps and illustrations, and there is a reproduction on the cover of a wonderful painting by Lauritz Haaland entitled 'Gjøa sailing the Northwest Passage.' However, in conception it is fundamentally flawed. The connection between Amundsen's voyage and the current and future threats to the Canadian north is tenuous, and, as a result, the book lacks focus. It could be a history of Amundsen's and Larsen's voyages or it could be an analysis of the current political situation with regard to the seaway, but it can hardly be both. One concludes that the editorial process adopted by the publishers is inefficient both with regard to concept and execution. The book should not have been allowed to reach the public in its present state. (Ian R. Stone, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

**ENDING IN ICE: THE REVOLUTIONARY IDEA AND TRAGIC EXPEDITION OF ALFRED WEGENER.** Roger M. McCoy. 2006. Oxford: Oxford University Press. xii + 194 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-19-518857-8. £17.99.  
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This is an unusual book, being, as it is, two separate but related stories connected by the presence of one