of error. The looming phenomenon was known to the ancients, and had certainly not been forgotten: Jefferson discussed it in his 'Notes on the State of Virginia' (1781–82), Scoresby had carefully documented similar unusual refraction phenomena off Greenland in the 1820s, and theoretical explanations already existed. So what is the purpose of this parable? Is it to remind us that we can all make mistakes? Or that it is difficult to get large projects funded? Or is its purpose to establish the entry of the United States into the field of polar exploration? The story is revisited briefly in chapter 3, where a couple of pages draw parallels between the fact that credit for discovery of the Antarctic ozone hole went to the British Antarctic Survey with their ground-based data rather than to NASA with their TOMS data, and the fact that Captain Wilkes received less credit than he deserved for mid-nineteenth century Antarctic discoveries. I must admit that I could not really see the point that the authors were trying to make here, or why NASA would need to be defended against a charge of sitting on their data rather than publishing it, when the data were derived from a new and only partially validated technique. But setting aside the question of relevance, it is an interesting digression. (W.G. Rees, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

NORTH-EAST PASSAGE TO MUSCOVY: STEPHEN BOROUGH AND THE FIRST TUDOR EXPLORATIONS. Kit Mayers. 2005. Stroud: Sutton Publishing. xiv + 241 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-7509-4069-7. £20.00.
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A copy of Hakluyt's *Principall navigations voiages and discoueries of the English nation* is found among the books of a deceased father, and the first accounts to be read by the legal heir are those of Stephen Borough of Devon about his voyages in Russian waters in the mid-sixteenth century. The would-be historian is so captivated by the story that he wants to find out more about the man, his exploits, and their effect on English maritime traditions. Can a good book result from such a beginning? Yes, it can, when the author is Kit Mayers and the pathway to this book has proceeded via the Maritime History Department of the University of Exeter. The present book is an enlarged and rewritten version of a dissertation that Mayers submitted some years ago. I have not read the dissertation, but I surmise that the text of the current book has been adapted so as to make it accessible to the general reader.

Stephen Borough, who is presented as a 'Tudor hero from Devon,' came from a family of sailors; his uncle, brother, and son were all well-known captains and explorers, and these are important facts among the scant biographical data that exist about Borough. His uncle, John Aborough, and his principals in London were probably the factors that pushed Borough into his career. In his footsteps followed his younger brother, William Borough, who became Comptroller of the Navy, and his son, Christopher Borough, who was later in the service of the Muscovy Company, travelling in that capacity and exploring parts of Asia.

Mayers historicises his hero in a very instructive and educational way. He explains how vessels were built in the period under consideration (the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), which saw the development from the single-masted to the three-masted rig. True enough, we do not really know what Borough's vessels were like, but Mayers extrapolates from other ships about which we know more, drawing conclusions about what Borough's *Edward Bonaventure* and *Serchethrift* most probably looked like. Since their tonnage is known, it is also possible to reconstruct their size with a high degree of certainty.

Stephen Borough's accounts also substantiate the level of navigational skills at that time. Mayers shares his knowledge of how a shipmaster in the sixteenth century made soundings, how he measured latitude, and to what extent he would have been able to estimate longitude. This is very informative for a reader who is not an expert on the practical side of seamanship. Mayers also demonstrates convincingly that Stephen Borough was one the earliest practitioners of the new scientific methods that had been put to use. This is all very well done.

The author leaves little room for doubt that Stephen Borough was a very competent master, which also explains why he avoided the fate that befell many other sailors in the service of the Muscovy Company, and why he returned safely from all his expeditions. Mayers underlines the uniqueness of Borough's voyages, which is thought-provoking. However, they were hardly, as Mayers will have it, the first of the great Tudor explorations, since there were several earlier ventures, like John Cabot's Northwest Passage expeditions of 1497 and 1498, and Sebastian Cabot's Northwest Passage expedition of 1508–09, all of which were just as 'great' and all of which were commissioned by King Henry VII — the first of the Tudor monarchs. But Borough's expeditions were, indeed, among the first English sea-borne expeditions, and they set off in a previously completely unknown direction. They did not discover what they were supposed to find, namely the Northeast Passage, even though they did venture as far as Novaya Zemlya, which Borough in 1556 may have been the first westerner to catch sight of (or was that Sir Hugh Willoughby and his ill-fated crew in 1553?). Instead they 'discovered' Russia, which nobody had expected to find in this direction. This led to the establishment of the Muscovy Company, which organised the first English trading stations outside Western Europe. This company set the pattern for all other overseas companies, including the East India Company.

One of the criteria for evaluating the scholarly quality of a work like this is whether the author is familiar with all the relevant literature, and whether he clearly positions himself in relation to earlier research. All this is necessary if the reader is to be able to decide whether the author himself has contributed something new, or to what extent

he has done so. This is a debatable point in Mayers' book. There is little doubt that he knows the relevant English literature on the topic (which is the most important aspect), and quite an impressive number of books and articles are mentioned in the notes. But Mayers himself does not comment on them very often or relate to them explicitly.

This weakness comes to the fore when Mayers paints the background to Borough's voyages and the first expeditions in search of the Northeast Passage. He places heavy emphasis on the sudden drop in cloth export during the 1550s, which impelled English merchants to seek other overseas exports outlets and no longer remain dependent on Spain and the Netherlands. According to the author, this was the decisive factor (and he is probably right), but it would have been nice if he had attempted to weigh this up against other issues, some of which might also have been necessary preconditions. One was the need for a route to the east that was not controlled by the Spaniards and the Portuguese. This question is hardly touched upon and could have been discussed at greater length. Mayers mentions that other historians hold different views, but he refrains, by and large, from discussing these.

Mayers' accounts of the expeditions of 1553–54 and 1556–57 are fascinating: one really does get an understanding of how brave these men must have been, and what kind of hardships they had to endure. Nevertheless, it may be argued that Mayers' perspective is too narrowly English. He takes no account of the fact that these narratives are also very important sources of northern Russian history. Borough's meeting with Russian sea-mammal hunters in 1556 is a very important source, shedding light on the economic activities of the Pomors in the mid-sixteenth century. In this connection, it is unfortunate that the author seems to be unaware of the discussion concerning the route followed by Borough on his 1556 *Serchethrift* voyage. He therefore perpetuates the prevalent misunderstanding in polar literature that Borough's first harbour in Russia was at 'Cola River' at Kola town, which today forms part of the city of Murmansk.

Borough estimated the latitude at 'Cola River' as 65°48', that is, 4° too far south (present-day Murmansk lies at 69°20'), despite the fact that there is otherwise a very high degree of accuracy in his latitude measurements. This was a solitary case, and according to Mayers the only possible explanation is that Borough for some reason wrote five instead of nine, or that Hakluyt made a mistake when he copied the account (neither of which is likely). Mayers does not consider a third possible explanation: that there was no mistake here. As early as 1901, the Russian historian/ librarian A.P. Filippov put forward the theory that what has been thought of as Borough's first harbour in Russia was not Kola River on the Kola Peninsula, but the Kuloy River in Mezen. The matter is significant because the location of 'Cola River' on the map clearly has repercussions for how the information contained in Borough's travel account should be interpreted. Today there is hardly any doubt that Filippov was right. The latitude measurement of 65°48' was as correct as could be, because Borough was at 'Kuloy River' on the eastern side of the White Sea (see Hultgreen and Nielsen 2005).

Let me also mention a few inaccuracies when it comes to Norwegian affairs. There are two misprints in the rendering of place-names (along the north Norwegian coast), both forgivable: Kjodvik instead of Kjelvik, and Moskenstraumen instead of Moskenesstraumen. Olaus Magnus was not 'bishop of Oslo,' but a Catholic archbishop of Sweden in exile after the Reformation. Fridtjof Nansen did not start his *Fram* expedition from the Bering Strait, but from the New Siberian Islands. The glossary compiled by Borough in his account of the 1557 voyage along the northern coast of Kola Peninsula does not consist of Russian words, as Mayers asserts, but of Sami words, a mistake that could easily have been avoided by consulting someone proficient in Russian. These are all minor inaccuracies in an otherwise fine and readable book, where the author obtains his goal, that is, to bring forward new and important knowledge about Stephen Borough, his exploits, and their effect on English maritime traditions. (Jens Petter Nielsen, Department of History, University of Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø, Norway.)

Reference

Hultgreen T., and J.P. Nielsen. 2005. Stephen Burrough at 'Cola River': a reconsideration. *Polar Record* 41 (217): 97–102.

WHALING IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES 1904–1931: A HISTORY OF SHORE AND BAY-BASED WHALING IN THE ANTARCTIC. Ian B. Hart. 2006. Newton St Margarets, Hertfordshire: Pequena. vxi + 365 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-9552924-0-09. £25.00.
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What used to be called the Falkland Islands Dependencies (formally defined in 1908) bordered a vast area of the Southern Ocean mainly south and east of the Falkland Islands, extending towards both the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans. It included the Antarctic Peninsula (or Graham Land as the British government preferred to call it at the time), the South Shetland Islands, the South Orkney Islands, the South Sandwich Islands, and South Georgia. With South Georgia and the South Shetlands as centres, the Dependencies contained the main Antarctic whaling grounds of the early twentieth century. Whaling started there in 1904 and developed until technological achievements and the economic crises of 1931 permanently caused most of the whaling fleet to operate in other regions of the Antarctic. These two historically significant years mark the beginning and end of Ian Hart's new book on Antarctic whaling history.

The book is organized in 20 chapters, starting with the historical foundations of the whaling industry. It