

Having declared up front my professional interest in the book, I feel safe in saying that what strikes me as its most intriguing (and most disappointing) feature is the near-invisibility of all things anthropological in Jenness' recollections. Regrettably, he tells us nothing about choosing an uncertain future in a still-fledgling profession over a secure one in the British foreign service, or about those whose thought and practice influenced his own, or the contradictions inherent in his dual role as scientist and civil servant. The lone exception, and it is barely so, is his light-hearted reflection on Bering Sea fieldwork in 1926, a story as much about adventures dodging Soviet authority as about the discoveries his efforts yielded. Travelogue comprises practically all the rest: accounts of holidaying in France during college days at Oxford, a tour of European museums on the brink of World War II, a post-retirement sojourn on Cyprus at the height of the anti-colonial Enosis movement. These pieces make good reading. Here and there they also offer tantalizing glimpses of aesthetic and political and scholarly sensibilities, but only glimpses, never the deeper ruminations one ordinarily associates with memoir. As a set, the seven original chapters scarcely add up to a rounded representation of the man's life, let alone his career: hence, Stuart Jenness' decision to include a selection of previously available writings, one each on fieldwork in New Guinea and the Arctic, the rest on work among the aboriginal peoples of British Columbia. No less importantly, this limited selection also provides a plausible explanation for the significant liberty he took in delving at length into two topics the memoirist himself (also regrettably) chose to avoid, in spite of their outsized place in his career and life: participation in the Canadian Arctic Expedition and estrangement from his friend and colleague Marius Barbeau.

The Diamond Jenness revealed in his own publications is an admirably modest man, given to tackling the job at hand without self-aggrandizing embellishment in any form. Much the same comes through in extant (alas, mainly professional) correspondence, some laced with his trademark self-effacing humour. This image of Jenness speaks volumes about what we find, and especially what we don't find, in the handful of writings that comprise the core of *Through Darkening Spectacles* (including even the barest hint as to the writer's intention in selecting the book's title). So, too, does the delicious detail that their author's initial inclination was to subtitle his manuscript *Some Memories of a Taugenichts*, a ne'er-do-well, or good-for-nothing person (p. xxii). And so again does the fact that the aging and ailing father reluctantly took his well-meaning son's advice to sit down at the typewriter one last time, but then only to keep mentally active, convinced as he was that "No one would have any interest in reading about my life" (p. xviii). When my own research into the subject was in its early stages, Stuart Jenness warned that his father had left precious little for biographers to sink their teeth into. How true. Now, what else to conclude but that the public persona embodied in his copious bibliography should serve, at least to his mind, as statement enough?

Just who might constitute this book's audience is difficult to say. But I, for one, welcome its appearance.

Barnett Richling
 Department of Anthropology
 University of Winnipeg
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2E9, Canada
 b.richling@uwinnipeg.ca

SOUTH BY NORTHWEST: THE MAGNETIC CRUSADE AND THE CONTEST FOR ANTARCTICA. By GRANVILLE ALLEN MAWER. Kent Town, South Australia: Wakefield Press, 2006. ISBN 1-86254-650-9. xiii + 319 p., maps, b&w illus., appendix, bib., notes, index. Hardbound. NZ49.95.

Publishers appear to believe, with good evidence, that the reading public has an insatiable appetite for volumes of "derring-do" in the polar regions, and that prospective authors must perforce engage in ever more convoluted mental gymnastics to find areas of the history of polar exploration that have not, in their opinion, been covered adequately in previous works. This seems to be the case in the present volume, the subject of which is, ostensibly, the "quest for the South Magnetic Pole," but which in fact offers very much more. For example, it includes a most detailed analysis of what precisely was seen, and when, by the officers of the various U.S. Exploring Expedition vessels, under the overall command of Charles Wilkes, during their voyages in that area of the Antarctic coast that Wilkes later labeled the Antarctic Continent. (The "contest for Antarctica" in the subtitle refers to the international disagreements arising from this voyage.)

The work starts with the arrival of James Clark Ross and his party at the then North Magnetic Pole on 1 July 1831, as part of the expedition of his uncle, John Ross, in *Victory*. This narrative leads to a disquisition on the early history of the study of magnetism. Due respect is accorded to the work of Norman, Gilbert, Gellibrand, Bond, Halley, Graham, Humboldt, and Gauss but then, as far as Britain was concerned, the work was taken over by the Admiralty, with names like James Clark Ross and Edward Sabine to the fore. Throughout the book, the technical aspects of the subject are explained clearly so that the merest tyro can understand them.

The first main section of the book, comprising more than 100 pages, is robustly entitled "The Antarctic Crusaders 1837–1843." It describes the Dumont D'Urville, Wilkes, and James Clark Ross expeditions to the Antarctic, stressing in each case the extent to which their work was directed towards increasing knowledge about magnetism in general and the location of the South Magnetic Pole in particular. But it is impossible, of course, simply to take this topic in isolation; each expedition is covered in detail, with many consecutive pages in which magnetism is not mentioned at all. The rivalries between the expeditions also

receive detailed attention, which tends to lessen the originality of the work implicit in its stress on the search for the magnetic pole. For example, the death of Dumont D'Urville certainly had the effect of slowing the publication of his results, but the details of his tragic demise, in a railway accident, are surely irrelevant for that focus of the book. After descriptions of the expeditions, the acrimonies arising from them are well covered in chapters entitled "Paper Warfare" and "Contradictions."

An interlude entitled "The Sphinx in the Ice" draws attention to the pivotal role of Georg von Neumayer in the promotion of polar science during the late 19th century. It includes a digression on Edgar Allan Poe and Jules Verne, both of whom focused on the unknown South in their stories.

The second major section, slightly shorter than the first at some 90 pages, is entitled "The Second Crusade 1898–1914." It covers Borchgrevink and Bernacchi, and Mawson, with walk-on parts for Drygalski, Scott, and Shackleton. A large portion of this section describes the epic journey by Edgeworth David, Douglas Mawson, and A.F. Mackay, during which they almost reached the then site of the South Magnetic Pole on 16 January 1909. The next major section, devoted to Mawson's great expedition of 1911–14, concentrates on the trek by Webb, Bage, and Hurley towards the South Magnetic Pole three years later, from the opposite direction. This is a relatively little known chapter in the history of polar exploration and is probably the best part of the book. The following chapters refer yet again to the second *idée fixe* that runs through the book, concerning the achievements (or otherwise) of the Wilkes expedition with regard not to magnetism, but to their alleged geographical discoveries. The book concludes with an interesting account of Charles Barton's "achievement" (within 1.6 km) of the South Magnetic Pole, which by this time was well out to sea, on 23 December 2000.

The book has a number of unusual features. For example there is a facsimile reproduction of Bernacchi's *South Polar Times* article of May 1902, which bore the catchy title of "The ESCHENHAGEN MAGNETIC INSTRUMENTS and the MAGNETIC VARIATIONS and DISTURBANCES they record." This had characteristically wonderful illustrations by E.A. Wilson and should be required reading for those who have cast aspersions on the seriousness with which the members of Scott's first expedition approached their task. There is also an interesting series of informative boxes in the text covering such topics as "A rock in a hard place" (covering the observation of a boulder embedded in a iceberg made during Balleny's expedition, and what Charles Darwin deduced from it) and "Scott's last journey," which is self explanatory. However, these boxes are often irrelevant to the stated aims of the book.

The illustrations are all from contemporary works, and it greatly grieves this reviewer to have to comment that the maps and charts presented are the least successful part of the work. Nearly all have been reproduced at such a

reduced scale that unless one has exceptionally sharp eyes or a powerful lens, many will not yield much useful information. The captions, too, are inadequate, not even going so far as to give the orientation of north in cases where the original drafter did not adopt the conventional orientation. One can easily appreciate the problems facing publisher and author in this regard. It would have been ideal if the charts, at least, had been prepared in fold-out format, but this costs money. The obvious alternative, having specially drawn maps illustrating the essential points, would also have significant cost implications, and so an unsatisfactory compromise has resulted. There is a full critical apparatus, including a useful glossary and a comprehensive index. The book is handsomely presented with an attractive dust wrapper.

This is a very worthy addition to the literature on both the main periods of what might be called crusades in the Antarctic. The author has been extremely diligent in his research and has unearthed a large number of previously obscure facts. The book covers much more than the rather restrictive fields indicated by the title, and indeed, it might have benefited from some fairly tight editing in order to restrict the seemingly endless digressions into Wilkesiana. However that is to cavil. The book is warmly recommended for all those with interests in Antarctic history, and the author is to be congratulated.

Ian R. Stone
Scott Polar Research Institute
University of Cambridge,
Lensfield Rd.
Cambridge CB2 1ER, United Kingdom
irs30@cam.ac.uk