

communities are seen to differ in terms of communal and egalitarian attitudes, environmental sustainability, kinship ties, internal or informal economic production, and perceptions of what constitutes entrepreneurship opportunity.

This is an interesting and useful compilation of aboriginal community development experiences from around the world, not least because it provides so many positive examples. There are some surprising gaps in representation of relevant literature, for instance, about aboriginal economic development experience in northern Canada, but these may simply reflect the location and focus of the authors. The theoretical development is thin, but in drawing these cases together, the foundation is provided, and students, readers, and researchers can build on this in further, much-needed work on the subject.

*Heather Myers  
1720 Thrums Road  
Castlegar, British Columbia V1N 4N4, Canada  
H.Myers@shaw.ca*

**ESSENCE OF POLAR PHILATELY: AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF POLAR PHILATELY.** By HAL VOGEL. Exton, Pennsylvania: American Society of Polar Philatelists, 2008. ISBN 978-0-9776449-0-2. x + 206 p., maps, colour illus., appendices, index. US\$45 postpaid in the United States; US\$50 postpaid to Canada; US\$55 postpaid elsewhere.

Philately is frequently described as a “visual hobby,” and *Essence of Polar Philately* with its crisp, full colour illustrations maintains that reputation. It is a well-researched work that will not disappoint readers.

The book is divided into two main sections: nine chapters of text, amply illustrated, and 13 appendices comprising 78 pages. A two-page preface, short notes about the author and editor, acknowledgements, and a one-page dedication to a lifelong supporter of organized polar philately complement the main body of the book.

Chapter one looks at ephemeral material and other collectible items that can reasonably be included in a category of polar philately. These items include mail and philatelic material associated with the Arctic and Antarctic and their proximate regions.

In chapter two we learn that polar philately has much in common with other philatelic specialties. For example, it includes postage stamps, cancelled mail, folded letters, postal stationery, postcards, and similar material. In other words, there is considerable overlap between them. But there are also differences. Although it might be informative to know something about the sender and recipient of a cover in a general postal history collection, this information is crucial in polar philately because it may be the only clue to the item’s polar “ingredient.” According to the author (p. 4), “the differences that characterize polar philately definitely involve the nature of its material and those with whom it was

associated.” The book argues convincingly that since polar philately is not as thoroughly documented as other facets of philately (e.g., military mail or trans-Atlantic mail), collectors in this area have a greater chance of making a lucky “find” to enhance their collections.

Chapter three, a rather lengthy one, expounds on the philatelic treatment of the different classes of polar material. For example, mail items from polar expeditions can be of two types: 1) items that already exist and 2) items whose owner participated in their creation. An example of the former would be a cover that an individual prepared to commemorate a polar expedition without the sanction of anyone affiliated with the venture. The second type is a piece of mail that is a communication from someone who was directly involved in a polar expedition.

The theme of chapter four is the significance of polar philately. We learn, for instance, that not all polar mail is philatelically inspired. The author emphasizes that in the earliest days of polar exploration, little (if any) mail was generated for purposes other than communication. Today, the situation is different: most of today’s polar mail is philatelic in nature.

In chapter five, which deals with the acquisition of material, we read that there are two main methods of acquiring polar items: directly or through a third party. With direct servicing, collectors can contact personnel whose sole function is to service mail submitted by collectors. The author calls this type of mail “designated.” Alternatively, “non-designated” mail is mail sent by collectors to an expedition leader who might or might not respond to these requests because these individuals have no obligation to service philatelic mail. Another quite useful section in this chapter is the list of philatelic organizations and in-print periodicals from around the world. Either source can provide further information on where to inquire about upcoming polar expeditions or other related events.

The value of a polar philatelic item is in the eye of the beholder, we are told in chapter six. An item may have very little monetary value on the open market, yet be highly prized by its owner for its sentimental value. Vogel lists what he describes as the “value factors” that determine the commercial worth of a particular collectible item: age, scarcity, significance, and popularity. However, an item’s value is also determined by the laws of supply and demand. No matter how old, scarce, or significant an item may be, if no one wants it, its value, at that time, is zero. Alternatively, items that are in vogue will command a high price notwithstanding that they are of recent vintage, produced in large quantities, and do not have any particular historic or other significance.

Every philatelic collecting specialty has its own highly prized pieces that most collectors can only dream about. Polar philately is no exception. The author reveals these in chapter seven. He refers to them as “pearls,” “prizes,” and “key items falling into the post 1953 period” (p. 67). For many readers this chapter, which is divided into three subsections, is one of the most enjoyable of the book. Readers not only get to see these outstanding polar items, but learn

why they are the *crème de la crème*. Chapters 7a and 7b picture and describe some of these items. Chapter 7c, entitled “Gems Showcase,” is a visual feast. No fewer than 43 pages are devoted to images, almost all in colour, of polar material such as notices of various kinds, postcards, covers, and letters. This section alone is worth the price of the book.

The ultimate goal of many philatelists is to exhibit their collections and, they hope, to earn a commensurate award. Chapter eight outlines the differences between showing one’s collection and exhibiting it. Although many of the processes involved in showing a polar exhibit are the same as those of exhibiting a general postal history collection, the author explains the differences in some detail. If an exhibit is to do well in competition, planning, deciding what to include, and preparing the exhibit are of paramount importance. The author spends considerable space discussing these aspects. It is an area well worth studying in detail, as it will repay prospective exhibitors in spades.

The concluding chapter is packed with useful information from a different perspective. In the first eight chapters, the author looks at the collectibles side of the hobby, whereas the last chapter is devoted to the collector. He asks (p. 134), “What constitutes the polar philatelic person?” Readers learn that a great commitment to the hobby is a prerequisite. The author then lists five additional characteristics of such collectors: knowledge of existing material; knowledge of polar history; knowledge of current polar affairs; and knowledge that they have pursued polar philately to their personal utmost. Obviously, the common thread is knowledge and this comprehensive, professionally written publication goes a long way in imparting a considerable amount of polar-related philatelic knowledge to readers.

*Essence of Polar Philately* is a scholarly publication that deserves a place on the bookshelves of philatelic libraries. The work is highly recommended for all lovers of postal history, but it will be of particular interest to collectors with an affinity for airmail and ship mail with a polar connection.

Tony Shaman  
Editor, *The Canadian Philatelist*  
PO Box 43103  
Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6S9, Canada  
tshaman@rogers.com

**RESURRECTING DR. MOSS: THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF A ROYAL NAVY SURGEON, EDWARD LAWTON MOSS MD, RN, 1843–1880.** By PAUL C. APPLETON. Edited by WILLIAM BARR. Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary Press, 2008. Co-published with the Arctic Institute of North America. ISBN 978-1-55238-232-5. xvi + 252 p., map, b&w illus., colour plates, notes, bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$42.95.

In mid-August of 1875, Dr. Edward Lawton Moss, accompanying Captain George Nares and other members of the British Arctic Expedition, climbed to the top of the southern

plateau of Washington Irving Island off the entrance to Dobbin Bay on the east coast of Ellesmere Island. Much to their surprise, they discovered two ancient-looking stone cairns on the plateau, but failed to locate any evidence of who might have built them. Moss made a quick sketch of the two cairns, a sketch he later back in England turned into a colour painting, now kept at the Scott Polar Institute in Cambridge. The drawing and the mention of the cairns in the expedition diaries resulted in our own investigation of the plateau in July 1979. By then, numerous finds of Norse artifacts in nearby 12th century Inuit house ruins strongly suggested that the builders of the old cairns could have been Norse explorers from Greenland (McCullough and Schledermann, 1999). The Washington Irving Island incident was only a minor episode in the life of Edward Moss, Royal Navy surgeon, naturalist, and talented artist, whose participation in the British Arctic Expedition constituted his only encounter with life in the Far North.

Prior to his sudden death in March 2006, Paul C. Appleton had submitted his manuscript, “Resurrecting Dr. Moss,” to the University of Calgary Press. The work was later edited by William Barr.

Appleton’s biographical sketch of Dr. Moss is based primarily on the doctor’s correspondence with family and friends, particularly with his wife, Thomasina, who died in 1927. Appleton was aided in his research by earlier efforts of a Vancouver lawyer, Robie Louis Reid, who had corresponded with Thomasina Moss and published a small article about her newlywed life with Dr. Moss in Esquimalt, British Columbia.

Edward Lawton Moss was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1843. In the early chapters, the author takes us through Moss’s young life, the early death of his father, and his graduation as a medical doctor in December 1862. After graduation, Moss apparently spent two years in America. Upon returning to Ireland in 1864, he joined the Medical Branch of the Royal Navy. The author points out that in those days, naval doctors were encouraged to pursue various scientific investigations in addition to their medical work, something that seems to have suited Dr. Moss well. In March 1864, he was posted to his first ship, HMS *Bulldog*, serving in the West Indies.

In chapters four and five, Appleton describes Moss’s service as part of what was termed “gun-boat diplomacy” in support of the then expansive British Empire. During an attempted ramming of an enemy ship off Haiti, the *Bulldog* ran aground and was eventually scuttled by the Captain. In 1866, Moss was posted to the troop ship HMS *Simoom*, where he spent the next four years in what appears to have been a rather boring and routine existence. His service at sea was followed by land-based service at the Portland Sick Quarters in Dorset.

Life for Dr. Moss took a decidedly more interesting turn in January 1872, when he was placed in charge of the naval medical facilities at the Pacific Station in Esquimalt, B.C. The chance for a more settled existence turned his thoughts to marriage, a move much encouraged by his mother. In chapters seven to ten, Appleton provides the reader with