

desperate and unsuccessful attempt to reach the departing *Proteus* as she headed south, the personality clashes in close quarters, and the surpassing of the British “Farthest North” by a few miles. According to expedition plans, a supply ship, the *Neptune*, was scheduled to reach Fort Conger during the summer of 1882; however, after failing to get through the Kennedy Channel, it cached only a small part of its precious cargo and headed back south. During the summer of 1883, a second relief expedition was sent north. The lead ship, *Proteus*, was crushed in the pack ice just east of the Bache Peninsula: the crew barely managed to escape with a minimum of supplies, which they later cached on nearby Pim Island. Failure of the supply and relief ships to reach Fort Conger resulted in Greely’s often second-guessed decision to abandon the station in the fall of 1883 and struggle southward along the Ellesmere Island coast in search of supplies and rescue. The epic journey from Fort Conger to what became their final camp on Pim Island lasted nearly two months. Only seven men survived the winter on Pim Island, and one of them died onboard Commander Schley’s ship, *Thetis*, following their rescue. The survivors were taken to St. John’s, Newfoundland, and subsequently to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where they arrived to a celebratory reception on 2 August 1884.

It is no wonder that the desperate retreat from Fort Conger caught the author’s attention, providing the material for the adventuresome 2004 re-enactment, superbly presented in the documentary. The six-person expedition party, using three kayaks, was led by Stephen Smith, a biologist and seasoned Arctic kayak tour leader. One of the expedition members was James Shedd, a great-great-grandson of Adolphus Greely.

The retracing of the retreat south in kayaks was a dangerous undertaking. Having traveled (albeit in a zodiac inflatable boat) in the icy waters off the east coast of Ellesmere Island, I can attest to the dangers of sudden and deceptively swift movement of ice floes. The danger of traveling in small crafts in this part of the Arctic was suddenly thrust upon the expedition when the adventurer-videographer, Scott Simper, was suddenly pinned in his kayak between the rocky ice foot and a large ice floe. The kayak was crushed, and Scott was severely injured and medically evacuated south. James Shedd took over as videographer until the party reached Pim Island.

The documentary version of *Abandoned in the Arctic*, scripted, produced, and directed by Gino Del Guercio, is excellent. The re-enactment scenes on Pim Island are not overdone, and the appearance of Greely’s great-great-grandson, wearing Greely’s glasses, adds a marvelous element to the presentation of this intriguing event in the history of Arctic exploration. The book and the documentary film explore the issue of cannibalism on Pim Island and the U.S. Government’s attempts to cover up the evidence that had been so obvious to the rescue party when the bodies were retrieved from the shallow graves on Pim Island. For the reader and viewer noticing the absence of any mention of the first two stone dwellings constructed by the Greely

party at Cape Wade (Eskimo Point) south of Pim Island, the 2004 expedition was aimed primarily at producing the documentary film about the Greely story and the epic journey that ended so tragically on Pim Island. The book is well written and illustrated, and the film production is superb. For anyone interested in the Arctic, its history, and its spectacular scenery, I highly recommend this documentary film and its accompanying book.

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