

IN A CRYSTAL LAND: CANADIAN EXPLORERS IN ANTARCTICA. By DEAN BEEBY. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994. 262 p., photographs, maps, bib., index. Hardbound. Cdn\$29.95.

Canadians interested in the polar regions have tended to look north, not south. Government policy has reflected this parochial view. Ottawa took 28 years to accede to the Antarctic Treaty; by that time (1988), it had become difficult to name any state in the world that was *not* a party to the treaty.

Dean Beeby's book is about 15 Canadians who chose to go their own way. The Antarctic map is dotted with their names, and the story of their adventures makes good reading. The book describes what these Canadians did and—sometimes at length—the story of each expedition.

Hugh Evans, a farmhand from Saskatchewan, wintered with the very first expedition to live on the mainland (1898–1900). Rupert Mitchell, of Perth, Ontario, was ship's surgeon on Ernest Shackleton's *Nimrod* voyage of 1908–09. Charles Wright, born in Toronto, was physicist on Robert Falcon Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition of 1910–13. Wright summarized the reaction of his countrymen by observing that "It struck people suddenly as a surprise, that men can go into the wild places of the earth merely to seek knowledge" (p. 71). Wright was with the party that found the bodies of Scott, Wilson, and Bowers. Afterwards he was lead author of the first book on Antarctic glaciology, and had a distinguished research career rewarded in 1946 with a knighthood.

George Douglas, from Montreal, was geologist on the Shackleton-Rowett expedition of 1921–22. Shackleton had intended to explore Arctic Canada, and as part of a bid for Canadian funds, had taken on Douglas as a "token Canadian"—to use Beeby's words. When Ottawa balked, Shackleton headed south instead. The opportunities for original work were limited, and Shackleton himself died on the expedition. Douglas subsequently spent 25 years occupying the Carnegie Chair of Geology at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

Frank Davies was a popular member of Richard Evelyn Byrd's first expedition of 1928–30. A physicist by training, his job was to study terrestrial magnetism and aurora at the "Little America" base on the Ross Ice Shelf. Later Davies worked in the Arctic, in naval intelligence during the war, and as a long-serving member of the Defence Research Board.

Newfoundlander Jack Bursey was also a member of Byrd's party—as dog-driver and handyman. Alan Innes-Taylor was a third Canadian participant in what Byrd had hoped would be an all-American team. A former R.C.M.P. officer, pilot, miner, and experienced dog-driver, Innes-Taylor responded to a call from Byrd for more dogs. Owing to shipping delays, by the time he reached Little America the expedition was homeward bound, and he spent less than 24 hours on the ice. Compensation came three years later when he was put in charge of 150 dogs on Byrd's second expedition.

It was natural that expeditions seeking pilots and engineers with bush-flying experience would look to Canada. Al Cheesman, from Saint John, New Brunswick, was recruited by Sir Hubert Wilkins in 1929 to fly his Lockheed Vega in the Antarctic Peninsula. Several flights were made, but the expedition failed in its aim to discover new land.

Herbert Hollick-Kenyon, from Ewing's Landing, British Columbia, was Lincoln Ellsworth's pilot on the first transcontinental flight (1935). Their story, which included four forced landings in the course of an unsupported flight over a distance equivalent to flying from Vancouver to Quebec City, is one of the epics of Antarctic exploration. Ellsworth's back-up pilots, who did not take part in the long flight, were James 'Red' Lymburner from Caistor Township, Ontario and Pat Howard, who had worked in northern Quebec with Lymburner. Ellsworth's 1938–39 expedition had Lymburner and another Quebec flyer, James Terice, as pilots.

Andrew Taylor, an engineer and land surveyor, was with the Royal Canadian Engineers in England when recruits were sought for Operation 'Tabarin,' a secret expedition to Graham Land in 1943. He jumped at the opportunity. During his second year in Antarctica he was put in charge of establishing Britain's first mainland base, at Hope Bay in Graham Land. A manuscript in which he described the adventure was never published.

The next Canadian Antarctic was Fred Roots, geologist with the Norwegian-British-Swedish expedition of 1949–52. Born in Banff and trained at the University of British Columbia, he proved to be a universally popular member of the team and a tough traveller. Roots' adventures on the expedition launched him on a long career as head of Canada's Polar Continental Shelf Project and, later, chief science adviser for the federal Environment Department.

Gareth Wood was one of three hardy skiers on the Footsteps of Scott expedition of 1985–86. Manhauling with two companions, he retraced the whole of Scott's route to the South Pole before being flown out after the expedition's support ship was crushed by ice.

Beeby's account ends with Pat Morrow, one of the founders of the Vancouver-based company Adventure Network International. This pioneering enterprise set up the first Antarctic commercial airline in 1985. It now operates four aircraft, and may well have influenced Ottawa's belated decision to accede to the Antarctic Treaty.

A number of Canadians have worked with the United States Antarctic Program. De Havilland Canada's Otter, Beaver, and later Twin Otter aircraft have been indispensable components of Antarctic logistics. Calgary companies supply tractors and buildings for Antarctic expeditions.

Beeby has produced a well-researched account of Canada's diverse contributions to Antarctic exploration and research. Some four hundred footnotes list sources, and there is a useful index. The few inaccuracies I spotted were from minor misunderstandings of the source material. I would like to have seen portraits of the characters, but these were probably unobtainable. The history would be easier to follow if the year could be shown as a footer on every page; the reader can lose track of time when expeditions last for years—as many do.

Charles Swithinbank
Scott Polar Research Institute
University of Cambridge
Lensfield Road
Cambridge CB2 1ER
England