

During the course of the search, hundreds of miles were covered by travelling parties using man-hauled sledges. The Navy has been criticized for not learning to use dog teams, for not being able to live off the land as men like John Rae did, and for not adopting native clothing more suited to the climate. These are all valid criticisms; the naval officers had their blind spots, but it should be recognized that they had been trained for the sea, and it was in that element that they expected to operate.

At the end of the great search, several northwest passages had been discovered, but no ship, not even a boat, had passed through any of them. On the other hand, thousands of square miles of arctic Canada had been delineated and added to the maps. It was a remarkable chapter in the history of the Royal Navy.

A new era of exploration started when Elisha Kent Kane passed through Smith Sound in 1853, nominally still searching for Franklin, but in reality hoping to reach the Open Polar Sea, which was, by some, believed to surround the North Pole. He and those who followed him up this "American route to the Pole" were (with the exception of the ill-conceived Nares expedition) not professional sailors, but highly individualistic adventurers. They certainly found plenty of adventure, many of them died as a result of inexperience and bad management, and survivors owed their lives largely to the support given to them by the polar Eskimos — the Arctic Highlanders, as John Ross had called them in 1818.

Across this northbound flow passed, from east to west, the efficient professional Norwegians — Nansen drifting across the Arctic Ocean, Amundsen successfully navigating a northwest passage and Sverdrup.

Finally, two men, in the same year, 1909, claimed to have reached the North Pole — Frederick Cook and Robert Peary. The claim of the former, a genial charlatan, was soon disproved. The latter, a brave man and a meticulous organizer but a selfish, aggressive paranoiac, was for long honoured as the "discoverer" of the North Pole. Few people believe that today.

The author has told the complex story with great skill. The book is a long one but, even so, it is astonishing how much detail of the many expeditions he has managed to include. Its outstanding merit, however, lies in the manner in which the author interprets and assesses the characters of the explorers themselves, as a result of his study of published works and private diaries and letters. He has his own heroes — Jane Franklin, John Rae and the Eskimos, for example (and who would quarrel with any of those?) — but he is no debunker of the traditional heroes. He is scrupulously fair, and if he records a frailty in a man, he will also record his strengths. Readers will not necessarily share all his judgements, but they are unlikely to disagree with many of them. The cast of characters is a fascinating one that few novelists could invent, and the story, indeed, often reads like a novel.

The book is well printed. There are a general map and 43 good sketch maps within the text. The end papers and chapter headings are embellished with attractive sketch portraits, and there are 13 other illustrations. There is a good bibliography of published and unpublished sources and an index.

Every polar enthusiast should have this excellent book in his library, and it is to be hoped that it will reach many new readers. They could not have a more comprehensive and entertaining introduction to the subject.

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Not since the days of *Canada and Its Provinces* have so many of this country's most prominent historians shared their vision of Canada's past. With the publication of this volume, the Canadian Centenary Series — an ambitious if interminably prolonged publishing initiative — is at last complete. The series is not bound together by a single interpretation or historiographical approach; the volumes cover specific time periods and regions and generally reflect the thinking of middle-of-the-road, traditional historians over the past 20 years. While the series has generally been praised for its comprehensive treatment of the available literature, it has not shown much evidence of historiographical innovation or methodological flourish. Rather, it has been characterized by solid and reliable works offering a contemporary assessment of the issues of Canadian history — or at least what was contemporary at the time each book was published. Morris Zaslow's second volume in the series (the first, *The Opening of the Canadian North, 1870-1914*, was published in 1971) is very much in this tradition.

Before discussing the book, it is important to draw attention to the crucial statement made about the Canadian North by the original editors of this series, neither of whom, unfortunately, lived to see it completed. Two of the 19 books in the series (or 3, if Tryggvi Oleson's controversial *Early Voyages and Northern Approaches* is included) have been devoted to the Canadian North, despite the fact that the region is sparsely populated and has been all but ignored by most of the historical profession. With the exception of Morris Zaslow and a small band of northern enthusiasts, few historians have paid much attention to the issues and concerns of northern Canadian history. All too many histories of Canada barely mention the region. The editors of the Canadian Centenary Series, therefore, are to be congratulated for stepping outside of the historical mainstream to bring the North to the attention of Canada's historical community.

That there is a northern historiography at all is due in large measure to the work of Morris Zaslow, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Western Ontario. *The Opening of the Canadian North* and Zaslow's other work did much to set the historiographical agenda for northern studies in this country. Zaslow has viewed the North largely through southern eyes; he is interested primarily in the motivating forces of southern action and is less concerned with the evolution of northern society. Through this emphasis, transmitted to his graduate students, he has created what has been called the "Zaslow school" of northern history — an approach to the subject that has dominated it for the past twenty years. Professor Zaslow has done much to shape the definition of the North itself. Avoiding the traditional association of "the North" with the Arctic, he has drawn our attention to that vast expanse he calls the "middle North" — the sub-Arctic band that stretches from the Yukon to Labrador, making up more than half of Canada's land mass. His steadfast insistence on a broad definition of the region has ensured coverage of the provincial norths, a region sadly ignored by this country's regional historians.

The *Northward Expansion of Canada* is an authoritative book, a work to be consulted rather than skimmed; those looking for thrilling tales from the high latitudes, in the style of Pierre Berton, will not find them here. Like all of Zaslow's work, it gives evidence on every page of exhaustive work in archival, primary and secondary sources. Because it is a work of analysis and reflection rather than a polemic, it should remain in the canon of important works about this country long after more popular nonce-books on the subject have been banished to the remainder tables.

A caveat must be noted. Zaslow seems at times to stretch the definition of the North past the breaking point. It is one thing to include the "middle North" in the book, though he defines it very broadly, but when he takes as an example of the debate over Indian enfranchisement a quarrel between the federal government and the Six Nations, he goes too far. The Six Nations live closer to the equator than to the North Pole and are surely not "northern" by any Canadian definition of the word.

The book, in fact, is not a history of the Canadian North from a northern point of view, nor does it claim to be. It does not examine the history of the region from the perspective of its people — certainly not its Native people. Though the photographs that illustrate the book mention some Natives by name, the text hardly deals with them as individuals at all. Rather, the book fulfils the promise of its title. It is a chronicle of the northward expansion of the power and sovereignty of this country, expressing itself in economic development, in the growth of political institutions, and in the effect of these on the region. Perhaps the curious, almost surreal photograph on the dust jacket is meant to symbolize this approach: the man, identified on the cover but not mentioned in the text, stands dressed in a business suit in front of a large airplane, the *Eldorado Radium Silver Express*, which was used in the late 1930s to fly radium concentrates from Great Bear Lake to the nearest railhead. Whether the photograph was taken in the North or South is not clear, and perhaps does not matter. The plane is a powerful symbol of new forces at work in the North and of Canada's determination to develop the region's resources. Northerners are noticeably absent from the picture.

The Northward Expansion of Canada, both by what it includes and by what it omits, will, like the rest of Morris Zaslow's work, no doubt exert a strong influence over the future direction of northern scholarship. It is to be hoped that it will have a similar effect on Canadian historical scholarship generally, drawing the attention of Canada's regional and economic historians to the important issues of northern development and northern life. Zaslow has devoted his career to ensuring that the vast reaches of the Canadian North are given fair treatment by the profession. This book is a strong, convincing statement of that conviction, and a challenge to Canadian historians to give the North its due.

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ALASKA STATE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS. Edited by GERALD A. McBEATH and THOMAS A. MOREHOUSE. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1987. 339 p.

On 3 January 1959 Alaska became the first state outside the continental United States. Coming into statehood, Alaska brought its own distinguishing features: an extreme northern climate, an area one-fifth the size of the contiguous states (twice the size of Texas), a small population (just over 500 000 people), strong regional loyalties, an influential Native population and valuable oil reserves at Prudhoe Bay. Thus the question: did these features nurture a government and politics different from that of the other 48 states?

McBeath and Morehouse present interesting original essays addressing the problem of distinctiveness and raise other questions about a state that is relatively unknown to most North Americans. The contributors include one historian and eleven political scientists, all of whom have taught in colleges and universities in Alaska; and at the time of publication two were public administrators and one a politician. The book is essentially a text on Alaskan government and politics. It opens with an historical account of the evolution of statehood, going back from Russian interest in the 1700s to struggles with Congress in the 1950s. Chapters then cover the culture of Alaskans and political institutions, such as elections, political parties, interest groups and the press. It culminates with articles on the institutions of government — the governor, the legislature, the administration and the courts. Canadians in particular will be interested in how a federal territory is transformed into a state and how oil revenues influence politics.

Two themes emerge in the book. The first is that Alaska has indeed nurtured a certain distinctiveness with its politics. The geography and climate have engendered a frontier mentality with a strong sense

of rugged individualism. At the same time, however, as the state matures, individual attitudes and institutional procedures seem to become more like those in other states. Electoral behaviour and the role of political parties tend to follow patterns developed in states to the south. Thus, while there are Alaskan features that are distinct, nevertheless, even in the far north characteristics of the governmental process seem to have a certain universality.

A second theme, and perhaps a more interesting one, is that Alaskan society remains very fragmented and polarized on key political issues. One cause of this is linked to the fact that Alaskan culture is dichotomized between a sense of individualism and populism on the one hand and a sense of the collective on the other. For example, Alaskans developed a constitution in which the separation of powers worked: a strong governor checks the legislature and an equally strong legislature can check the executive. At the same time, the people expect powerful legislation on the environment, for instance, which calls for concerted action rather than divided powers.

The fragmentation is also manifested in the urban-rural divisions, as well as in strong ethnic differences. Naturally one would look for a significant centripetal force, a power to counter fragmentation: an individual or institutions to provide an integrative mechanism. The contrary seems to be the case. Societal divisions are reinforced by the instruments of politics. In the federal system, for example, local governments have significant powers and weak political parties enable powerful interest groups to have their way.

According to the authors, governing institutions also offer little to counter the centrifugal forces of faction. With weak political parties the legislature lacks coherence and direction (p. 259). A "sunshine" movement was developed as one way of overcoming the influence of factions in an attempt to open the legislative process. While political campaign funding must now be revealed, little else has happened to make the legislative process more effective.

An especially interesting chapter covers the Alaska courts. The judicial process emerged in the 1950s when two important reforms were being called for: a unified court system and a merit system for selecting judges. Both ideas were incorporated into the Alaska constitution.

Another interesting feature of the court system has been the adoption of the Missouri plan, whereby voters decide on the retention of a judge in office. The process is not an election and does not involve partisan activity on the part of competing judges. But voters do decide if in fact a judge should be retained for an additional term of office.

One criticism of the book may be suggested. As there are distinctive features to the system in Alaska, features such as resource politics or Native politics, why not depart from a textbook approach and include chapters on these topics? In fairness, it should be noted that in chapter 3, on federalism, a great deal of the content is on Native governing powers, and resource politics are touched upon in a number of places. But these issues are not found in the politics of most states and would appear to warrant special coverage.

The book is an excellent work on the Alaskan political process. It is informative, comparative and the right place to start for anyone interested in investigating government and politics in the 49th state.

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ARCTIC AIR POLLUTION. Edited by B. STONEHOUSE. London: Cambridge University Press, 1987. 328 p. Hardbound. £30.00; US\$49.50.

The Arctic has been both romanticized and feared in poems and storybooks. It stirs both strong empathy and negative feelings in