

TRAILS OF AN ALASKAN GAME WARDEN. By RAY TREMBLAY. Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1985. ISBN 0-88240-273-0. 176 p., 1 map, 19 illus. Softbound. Cdn\$11.95, US\$9.95.

Their actions are those of policemen: constant and varied responsibilities aimed at protecting the wildlife of Alaska. They continue to address situations that are seldom appreciated: checking on illegal hunting and fishing, tagging animals, hunting in restricted areas, enforcing regulations — rules and regulations devised to protect the wildlife and that are becoming more complex with the passing of the years.

This book outlines the responsibilities of the people who have chosen to act as enforcers of the rules. The author is one such person who took up this vocation after several years as a trapper in the remote areas of Alaska where he learned the ways of trappers, their techniques and their lifestyles. He started work as a game warden when rules and regulations were relatively simple, when lifestyles of the natives posed only a few problems. With increasing populations and the encroachment of advanced civilizations in the state, more complex regulations were required to serve the interests of wildlife management. With the increase in complexity came new people who were less interested in the "old" ways of man against nature and the natural laws.

According to the writer, a game warden himself, the purpose of game wardens may be widely misunderstood. In his highly readable paperback describing the varying activities of wardens, he writes, "the first six years as a game warden were the most rewarding and interesting, and provided the basis for the majority of the chapters." In Tremblay's well-described view, game wardens (who are required to enforce the rules and regulations) and natives (who rely on hunting and trapping for their existence) often came into competitive positions in which the natives' normal lifestyle was in open violation of the rules. Tremblay relates in considerable detail how he would "look the other way" when an open violation occurred. At no time did the natives ever try to hide their natural practice. They would openly show him the distribution of illegally taken animals among the members of the hungry village, then apologize for breaking the white man's rules.

Trails of an Alaskan Game Warden draws its title from the varied terms of reference under which these outdoors people operated. Trappers followed trails that took them into places where man had never tramped before, hunting and trapping the elusive wildlife for whatever reason. Much of the material used in producing this narrative came directly from specific experiences the writer encountered in carrying out his duties as an Alaskan game warden: the time he left his snowshoes behind because low snowfalls indicated no need for them, only to find that he had to service an area where high snowfalls had occurred; the problems that arose because an inquisitive bird fell into the fuel tank of his plane when someone had neglected to replace the fuel cap; conflicts between biologists and wildlife agents who saw wildlife management from very different points of view; searches for natural hermits who chose to live solitary lives yet had to be "looked after" if accidents befell them. One of the problems that became a major concern was the taking of trophy animals in the area. In concert with taxidermists from the mainland United States, guides would assist non-hunters and others who wanted the material only for good trophies. They were interested in neither the meat nor the out-of-season aspect of the hunt. In contrast, wardens were sometimes asked to provide air ambulance service for injured people when other available transportation was either inadequate or too slow. The variety in the duties of game wardens is revealed in every tale that Tremblay tells, the stories of a man who not only lived all his working life in Alaska but who loved the country, its people and the wildlife.

"Behind every successful man stands a devoted woman," as the saying goes. When applied to the Fish and Wildlife Service, the word devoted took on a special meaning. Tremblay didn't realize how much time he spent away from home tending to his duties until one time his wife presented him with her tally of the days he spent travelling. In one year it amounted to six months! During these long absences, she

looked after the house, their children and the Fish and Wildlife office. Her "responsibilities" as the wife of the game warden included monitoring all radio broadcasts by pilots in the area, tagging beavers, and generally looking after the "office," although she was never a paid member of the service.

The writer tells how the Fish and Wildlife Service changed from the time he first joined the service in the 1950s up to the present. Those changes, similar to changes "down south," altered the life of game wardens, and the game wardens also changed. The Fish and Wildlife Service was moved to Public Safety, where agents operate much like state troopers, "so now we have officers enforcing the law without understanding the reasons for their existence and managers requesting regulations that are often unenforceable."

Trails of an Alaskan Game Warden is a highly readable book on the duties and responsibilities of an enforcement officer. It is also the outpouring by a man who loves the life he leads, the land he works in, and the animals he seeks to protect. This he does in a manner that presents to the reader a better appreciation of the life of a game warden and at the same time gives the views of a man who wants to share that knowledge with his fellow man.

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FIELD AND THEORY: LECTURES IN GEOCRYOLOGY. Edited by MICHAEL CHURCH and OLAF SLAYMAKER. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985. 213 p., illus., index, bib. Hardbound. Cdn\$32.00. US\$25.95.

Canada has more permafrost than any country in the western world, and more seasonally freezing ground as well. Notwithstanding Alaska or the northern United States, Canada is probably most affected economically by the consequences of such freezing. It is a Canadian, too, Ross Mackay, who probably knows most about the natural effects of the freezing of the ground. Some six years ago he retired from his professorial position at the University of British Columbia, and a series of lectures by specialists in the many aspects of geocryology was presented in his honour.

The lectures are now published in book form and demonstrate the wide-ranging nature as well as the diversity of approach inherent in the current knowledge of freezing ground. Ross Mackay specializes in the application of scientific methods, through field studies, to the analysis of the natural processes. Included in this volume are papers describing, for example, laboratory experimental studies and theoretical analyses of the fundamental thermodynamic processes (the scholarly summary by Gold, an ice physicist); the intensity and frequency of periglacial, hydrological events (the paper by Rapp, a distinguished physical geographer); and approaches to clarifying slope stability for civil engineering purposes (the paper by Morgenstern, an engineer).

One of the remarkable things about Ross Mackay is the extent to which he studies the work of others, whether in another discipline or another language, that could bear upon his immediate research. Thus his own works are those of the true scientist, and a similar spirit imbues this book. Half the authors are from outside Canada — mostly from the non-English-speaking world. The paper by Romanovskij on ice and soil wedges in the U.S.S.R. draws attention to a subject that has been comprehensively investigated there. Alfred Jahn's article, while based on his detailed studies in Spitzbergen, brings the middle European viewpoint, and we see a convergence with Mackay's approach. The contribution by Fitzharris based on his New Zealand work on avalanches reflects the attention Mackay has given to this phenomenon.

The five-year interval between preparation and publication of the lectures seems unfortunate, but much of the value of the book is as a

broad-ranging review by authoritative authors for those who are not specialists — and, let it be said, for narrow specialists also. Some of the contributions are difficult for most earth scientists: Outcalt's paper is exclusively about a mathematical model. The preceding one, by M.W. Smith, though, concerns more easily grasped physical models that are a good link between the purely descriptive and purely theoretical. On the whole, one may be assured that the material is not of the ephemeral nature of many research papers, and the book deserves to be widely read by students and their teachers who are sometimes inclined to see geocryology (or periglacial studies) through blinkered eyes.

As is often the case in volumes of this nature, there is an introductory chapter, rightly laudatory, about Ross Mackay's scientific procedures, written by his friend and colleague W.H. Mathews. This reviewer always finds such chapters especially interesting, a celebratory leavening of what could otherwise be heavy fare; this one will remind those knowing Ross Mackay personally of the extraordinary, delightful person, and rigorous scientist, that he is.

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COMPANY OF ADVENTURERS, Vol. I. By PETER C. NEWMAN.
Markham: Penguin Books Canada Ltd., 1985. 413 p., notes, bib.,
index, illus. Cdn\$25.00.

No single economic force has so profoundly influenced the development of Canada as has the fur industry. And except for a brief period when the Northwest Company eclipsed the Company of Adventurers Trading Into Hudson's Bay, no corporation has commanded such control over the industry as has the Hudson's Bay Company. Granted its Royal Charter in 1670, the HBC has become a household word for Canadians, whether they speak of exploration, native people, or where to buy a new living room suite. To chronicle the corporate history of this institution is surely a bold and ambitious task.

In *Company of Adventurers, Volume I*, Peter C. Newman attempts just that. This initial volume encompasses HBC history from incorporation until the mid-nineteenth-century exploits of John Rae, and a further volume is planned. The fainthearted would pale at the very conception of such arduous labour; they would be struck dumb at the notion that such a Herculean task might be attempted by someone whose previous efforts have primarily concerned the corporate and political power structure of twentieth-century Canada. Newman's impressive ability to collect and assimilate information is enviable — an ability, no doubt, that has earned him his status as one of Canada's top journalists.

In his Foreword, Newman explains his approach:

This is a journalist's book, a search for the stories, the themes, the personalities who dominated the first century of the Company's long stewardship. I believe it is a valid new approach to an old subject because it is rooted in the writer's own desire to make sense for himself of the tantalizing moments that gave the history of the HBC its meaning and of the beguiling individuals who gave it excitement. The hard-bitten Bay men profiled in this volume are as true to life as I could make them, and I have carefully limited myself to the available evidence.

The approach expressed here points both to the strengths and to the weaknesses of *Company of Adventurers*. As "a journalist's book," the book is popular history and must be clearly distinguished from a study such as Harold Innis's *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (1930). Although Newman's research has been considerable, the author's priorities place lively, confident interpretations of fact and occasional glib solutions to complex issues above an exacting and disinterested analysis of those issues.

Newman draws an attractive energy from the human dimension of those who figured prominently in the HBC, from such early explorers

as Frobisher, Hudson, and Radisson, through Prince Rupert, the first governor of the Company, up to Dr. John Rae. As a result, the book exudes a ready appeal and will be eagerly devoured by readers unfamiliar with the HBC and the fur trade in Canada. The appendices include a transcription of the original Royal Charter, granting Prince Rupert and his 17 fellow investors their control over the lands draining into Hudson Bay on May 2, 1670. (The date is transposed in *Company of Adventurers* to read May 2, 1760.) Another appendix offers brief profiles of 19 early corporate investors. Other appendices list the governors and deputy governors of the Company, a record of annual dividends paid, and a chronology from 1610 to 1799. I fail to understand why John Rae's mid-nineteenth-century contributions are chronicled in a volume that professes to be a search for "the personalities who dominated the first century of the Company's long stewardship" and that supplies a chronology ending with the year 1799. Here, perhaps, Newman's enthusiasm for the human interest overrides his principles of organization.

Still another appendix lists some 200 "resource people" consulted or interviewed during the preparation of the book. Such a distinguished and comprehensive list recommends the work, although I have spoken to more than one of these "resource people" who think the direction and information they provided is misrepresented in Newman's final draft. Thus, what might seem a solid history based on the opinions and research of experts is not always so.

Newman provides his documentation for quoted material and, to a much less satisfactory extent, for detailed facts in Appendix Eight. Once again, by offering the sources of some of his information, he creates the impression of thorough and painstaking accuracy. However, in a work of this scope, involving so many thousands of pieces of evidence, more complete documentation is essential if this book is to contribute anything more than a vague enhancement of popular awareness of the long-lived Company. Perhaps an example of the handicap created by this incomplete documentation will clarify my point. In his discussion of Rae's 1846-1847 expedition, Newman writes: "[H]e set out to prepare for the winter by shooting '120 deer, 62 caribou' and scores of ducks and geese" (p. 301). The quotation marks around "120 deer, 62 caribou" indicate that Newman is quoting from archival or published record, although no documentation supports the quote. Farther down that same page, Newman quotes a sentence that his documentation indicates comes from Rae's *Narrative of an Expedition to the Shores of the Arctic Sea in 1846 and 1847*, page 150. One must assume that the reference to "120 deer, 62 caribou" appears in that same narrative. But in the contemporary accounts of that region — in fact, even in many twentieth-century accounts of northern travel and exploration — the word "deer" is used to describe "caribou." To my knowledge, no deer-like ungulate other than the caribou inhabits the area of Repulse Bay and Rae Isthmus, where the shooting occurred. So if Rae shot only 62 "caribou," what were the 120 "deer"? As a careful reader, I want to check this reference. Perhaps Rae shot 120 muskoxen? Perhaps he is distinguishing between two different subspecies of caribou? Perhaps this is a lapse in Rae's customary acuity? Perhaps the T. & W. Boone edition (1850) of Rae's narrative, from which Newman's note indicates the reference is taken, is faulty? Or perhaps the confusion is Newman's? But to answer these questions first requires a complete reading of Rae's narrative in order to locate the passage, because the documentation provided in *Company of Adventurers* gives no page reference. Even this effort will not suffice if the quoted material comes from some source other than Rae's narrative. To have added the appropriate page number would not have interfered with the flow of Newman's account, as what documentation there is appears unobtrusively in the appendix and is not signalled by an irritating asterisk or superscript in the main text itself.

This illustration is intended to make my point concrete; it is but one of many problems with the documentation that will frustrate demanding readers. Someone wanting only a general sense of the HBC's corporate history will have no patience with what will surely be seen as nit-picking. But northern specialists and informed fur-trade enthusiasts should be alerted to the limitations of this popular history of the HBC.