

Wiebe's "The Naming of Albert Johnson" demonstrates how even well-worn material can be imaginatively recast. Avid readers will be familiar with Dick North's *The Mad Trapper of Rat River* and Thomas Kelly's *Rat River Trapper*, two previous accounts of this mysterious recluse. Wiebe begins, however, where these two chroniclers left off. It is not so much *what* happened that intrigues Wiebe, but *why* it happened. Accounting for Johnson's sudden and extreme violence by framing it within the primitive belief that one falls prey to evil forces if his name is discovered, Wiebe succeeds in linking these two principal features of the Mad Trapper legend — his violent end and his mysterious identity. The story becomes more than a series of historical and bizarre events in 1932; the treatment transforms it into a timeless and universal comment about human experience.

Several other selections in *Stories from the Canadian North* make clear that the imaginative faculties are not restricted to fiction alone. R. M. Patterson's "The Dangerous River" lucidly illustrates the importance of imagination in travel writing. Without it, the daily record of the traveller's experiences will make reading as exciting as a grocery list. Similarly, George Whalley's "The Last Journey," excerpted from his longer work *The Legend of John Hornby*, bears out that biography, although accurate and based on fact, does not have to be uninteresting or divorced from imagination. The imaginative scope provides an interpretation, a frame through which to view a thousand unrelated events. Once introduced to Patterson's writing or the enigmatic figure of John Hornby, the reader will find himself on the path to a wealth of new literature that is both stimulating and entertaining.

Some reservations need to be made, if only to temper my general enthusiasm for the book. First, the illustrations are totally inappropriate. They exude a technical naiveté that has nothing to do with the simplicity and economy of Eskimo art, and seems remarkably out of place in this collection of sophisticated and intelligent writings. Second, although Whitaker has commendably chosen imaginative treatments of the northern struggle to survive, her selections, with the exception of two or three humorous pieces, rarely admit of any other experience. For example, Patterson's full book *The Dangerous River*, from which a small segment is excerpted in this edition, devotes the introductory chapter to relating the notion of the legendary haunted Headless Valley, a popular misconception of the Nahanni River that is shown to be completely inaccurate in the remaining six chapters. In fact, Patterson's reason for writing the narrative is to dispel this false belief. Significantly, only this initial chapter appears in *Stories from the Canadian North*. Much the same is true of Whalley's "The Last Journey." Although *The Legend of John Hornby* tells in twelve chapters of Hornby's lifetime in the Northwest Territories, only his fatal winter on the banks of the Thelon River — admittedly a powerfully dramatic episode — receives attention here. Our relationship to the North has changed considerably in the last few decades, and it is perhaps time we stopped seeing it solely as a land of impending death, for to admit of no other experience is to restrict our understanding and appreciation. Like any other geographic region populated by human beings, the North offers a broad range of human experiences.

These experiences have been the subject of a growing number of good writers, many of whom are represented in *Stories from the Canadian North*. Whitaker's anthology not only leads us to these authors, but to many evenings of stimulating and rewarding reading for the reader whose imagination has outgrown the hackneyed stereotypes of most northern thrillers.

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WORLD GLACIER INVENTORY WORKSHOP (PROCEEDINGS).

Published by the International Association of Hydrological Sciences, 1980. 351 p. \$39.00 U.S.

The World Glacier Inventory project slowly came to life in the 1960's as an outgrowth of the International Hydrological Decade. The project, now under the auspices of the International Commission on Snow and Ice, is designed to generate a data base that can be used for studies of water resources, climate change, etc. An international workshop on the inventory project was held in Switzerland in September 1978 to deal with

techniques and problems of inventory, and this proceedings volume of 42 short papers is one result.

Rather than being restricted to methodology papers, the book is best described as a mixed bag of things glaciological, including such interesting but not-too-relevant subjects as shapes of glaciated valleys and models of climate/glacier relationships. Many of the papers do deal with methodology: each participating country seems to have encountered its own particular difficulties regarding glacier mapping, and many of these problems are outlined by respective authors. A significant amount of coverage is given to the problems some countries (such as Canada) are having trying to conform to the standard classification scheme prescribed by the ICSI. Other difficulties mentioned include lack of decent base maps and the killing of a field assistant by irate Afghans. A number of papers dwell at least in part on problems of distinguishing glacial from non-glacial ice, and estimating ice volumes beneath debris covers.

Other papers present preliminary results of inventories in various countries; many of these are of particular interest as they deal with regions little-known to most Westerners, such as the Tibetan Plateau and Chilian Shan regions of China. Russia and the Himalayas of India, Nepal and Pakistan are fairly well represented. These papers are not consistent with regard to subject matter; some concentrate on numbers and surface areas of present-day glaciers, others on present and/or past equilibrium-line altitudes or mass-balance variations. One deals with iceberg counts in Greenland, another with snow and sea ice over the whole world.

Of great value in this volume are the bibliographies that follow most of the papers; these lists include an abundance of literature on glacier distribution, mass balance, and related topics in foreign journals that North Americans would not ordinarily run across. Also of interest are transcripts of discussions that followed some of the original presentations at the workshop. The only editorial problem I perceive in the book is that several of the abstracts are quite useless in terms of the amount of information contained in them.

The book has at least something of interest to just about any glaciologist, and would be useful as well to global lumpers, splitters and counters in other fields (insofar as it shows that no two countries can agree on how an inventory should be run). It may be ordered from the IAHS Treasurer, 2000 Florida Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, U.S.A.

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HUDSON'S BAY TRADER. By LORD TWEEDSMUIR. London: Robert Hale Ltd. Toronto: Nelson Foster & Scott, 1978. ISBN 0-919324-37-1. 188 p., photographs, map. \$8.95.

Hudson's Bay Trader is a republication of the original edition issued in 1951. The book is the diary kept by the author during a year (1938-1939) in the service of the Hudson's Bay Co. at Cape Dorset, Baffin Island. In the introduction, the author points out that at first, while writing the diary, he did not have the intention to publish it. (p. 15; the reference numbers in parentheses are given for information only, because it does happen that one theme recurs many times). Therefore, one should not expect a structured and exhaustive description of the life in Cape Dorset, but one can find here a lively review of the events that particularly impressed the author. It is his father, John Buchan (writer and high-ranking official who was at the time Governor-General of Canada), who initiated the publication of this diary.

The purpose of Lord Tweedsmuir's stay on Baffin Island was very likely due to a need to recover his health after a long tropical disease (16). This convalescent man who recovers his strength little by little embarks on many exciting outings, tours and hunting trips. His descriptions, however succinct, form the structural body of this book.

The author quite easily wins the reader over because he expresses such rare honesty towards his misadventures; he falls in freezing waters (55), recognizes that he is cold (87), is wounded by his own ship (139), loses a mitt (154), draws many cartridges before getting his prey (155). But his inexperience is not eternal; he makes progress and becomes more and more autonomous; the fruit of his hunting keeps improving the meals at the trader's post (115).

In order to break the monotony of the daily routine at the post, the author undertakes different outings such as hunting trips (Ch. 2, 4) and visits to isolated camps. One feels his *joie de vivre* in tasting those copious meals (100), his excitement when spring returns (173), or in his description of warm reunions between whites (89), the pleasure he experienced during evenings spent in the company of Eskimos (126). He often mentions that he is happy (68, 126, 168, 179). The reader wonders then why Lord Tweedsmuir did not prolong his stay at Cape Dorset.

In his brief through gracious description of the Eskimos (126) the author does not criticize or judge the people; nor does he try to inflict upon the reader any philosophical consideration or comment on their morals, or degree of "acculturation." He does not question the justification or merits of the hunting or trapping customs. He merely notes that hunting is necessary to the survival of man as well as of the dogs (20), and that the use of a rifle or a motor-boat is a way to facilitate a regular supply of game.

One should also point out that the author excels in describing in a few lines the people that are strikingly interesting to him: Tom Manning's wife (17) or Pouta (120), Pitseolak's first wife, or his companion Chesley Russel (114) who at the age of 35 had already spent 18 years in the Arctic; also, among those he is drawn to, Saila is a dignified and interesting character mentioned by the author (21, 102). The famous Pitseolak (21) is, no more than the others, the object of a systematic description, but he is rather the sum of many remarks, hints and sketches given through the pages, depicting his abilities as well as his human qualities. These remarks allow the reader to appreciate many facets in the personality of such an exceptional human being.

It is interesting to emphasize also that Lord Tweedsmuir, by giving his paintings and brushes in 1939 to Pitseolak, contributed to the birth of graphic art in Cape Dorset, and that later in 1975 he donated Pitseolak's first water-colors, which were in his possession, to the Museum of Man in Ottawa.

A few thoughts on Eskimos' life and attitudes were shared by the author while travelling with them in sleigh-rides: these thoughts suggest to what extent the natives were living in a state of semi-starvation (125-128) at times, and show also how the equipment they used for their daily tasks was far from perfect (92, 117, 126, 141).

Although the reading is pleasurable, the reader eager to satisfy his thirst for knowledge will not be satisfied with just the factual narration tinted with humour and vivid style; but the sensitivity with which the author relates this narration makes the book a personal testimony on the role and attitudes of the white towards the autochthon during that epoch between the two-wars.

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ECOLOGY OF A SUBARCTIC MIRE. Edited by M. SONNENSON. Ecological Bulletins No. 30. Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Natural Science Research Council, 1980. 313 p., illustrations, bibliography, index. Cloth.

The International Biological Programme (IBP), which involved the collaboration of scientists from over 40 countries with partial participation from some 50 other countries, was a remarkable achievement. After five years of informal discussions, the programme had as its general theme the Biological Basis of Productivity and Human Welfare, and was officially launched at the First General Assembly in 1964 under the aegis of the International Council of Scientific Unions. One of its major tasks was to study organic production of land, fresh water and marine ecosystems on a worldwide basis. It was within this context that investigations on arctic and subarctic lands, under the title of *The Tundra Biome*, were initiated. At meetings in 1967, it was agreed that a systems approach should be followed and a generalized ecosystem model was developed to ensure a high degree of uniformity in the methods to be followed and the types of data to be collected. Emphasis was to be given to the study of energy flow and the problems of nutrient cycling.

The volume now published by the Swedish Natural Science Research Council contains scientific papers covering many, but not all, aspects of

tundra ecology obtained at Stordalen near Abisko (68°21'N; 19°05'E) which was one of the fifteen sites which formed the Tundra Biome group. The topics covered include climate; physical properties of the soil-water system; availability and circulation of plant nutrients; plant distribution and community composition; biomass determinations; aspects of photosynthesis; physiological studies on *Sphagnum*; nitrogen cycling; and energy flow. There were no studies on major herbivores at Stordalen.

Those readers of *Arctic* who wish to compare the Stordalen site with others included in the Tundra Biome should consult another volume of the same series — Bulletin 20 — *Structure and Function of Tundra Ecosystems* (T. Rosswall and O. W. Heal (eds.) 1975), which provides word models of all the IBP Tundra sites.

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FACES FROM HISTORY: CANADIAN PROFILES AND PORTRAITS. By GEORGE WOODCOCK. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1978. 254 p. \$29.95.

Faces from History is a selection of photographs, with text, of 120 notable Canadians. The book, which measures 31 by 24 cm, devotes two pages to each entry, text on the left and a full page portrait on the right. The clearly and concisely written text, combined with the portrait, allows the reader to identify with the individual being portrayed, to ascertain his or her temperament, accomplishments, strengths and weaknesses in a real way rather than the dry, dull nonentities that often characterize the pages of history texts.

The book is subdivided into nine sections: The Colonial Period, 11 portraits; The Men of Confederation, eight portraits; From Ocean Unto Ocean, 15 portraits; The Fact of Quebec, 13 portraits; The Opening of the West, 21 portraits; Land Beyond the Mountains, 11 portraits; The True North, eight portraits; Provinces of the Mind, 22 portraits of writers and poets; and Day of Trial, 11 portraits of those who attempted to shape the present and future. Selections of portraits are based on availability and quality but represent a cross-section which should have appeal to a wide audience.

For those interested in the north, there are people such as William Carpenter Bompas, John Rae, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Wop May, Joseph-Elzéar Bernier and Henry Asbjorn Larsen, each of whom put his stamp and technique on travel and survival in that inhospitable land.

The writing style and selection of photographs gives the book appeal to both the young and not-so-young. It adds a dimension of reality to history and should be placed in all junior and senior high schools throughout Canada as it brings to life many of the people who have helped to shape our destiny through politics, exploration, entrepreneurship, writing and justice. To those interested in the north, as Editor of *Arctic* I offer the challenge: Let's have similar portraits of northern notables that can appear in the journal and ultimately be combined into a book that will capture the past and excite readers of the future as *Faces from History* demonstrates it can be done. I request only one modification and that is that there be a reference section added to each entry to provide ready access to additional literature, a feature regrettably lacking in the reviewed volume.

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