THE HISTORY OF GREENLAND: VOL. II: 1700 TO 1782. By Finn Gad. Translated by Gordon C. Bowden. *Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1973. 6 x 9½ inches, 446 pages, illustrated. $27.60.*

The first volume of Gad's *History of Greenland* covered the period from earliest archaeological records to 1700, at the dawn of Danish-Norwegian civilization (reviewed in *Arctic*, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 245-6). This second of four planned volumes on the history of Greenland is a translation of high quality and of lasting value to English-speaking northern scholars, the original Danish edition of which appeared in 1969 as *Grønlands Historie II* (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag/Arnold Busck, 760 pages).

Volume II covers, of course, a shorter period of time and provides a much more detailed coverage than does the previous volume, because of the greater wealth of available written records. The history of developments in Greenland — actually only West Greenland — are set out from the earliest beginnings of recorded Danish-Norwegian re-colonization up to the important Danish reforms of 1781-82. The volume constitutes a poignant record of Denmark's connection with Greenland: the story of a missionary's zeal in opposition to the selfish motives of many northern adventurers, of battles with Greenland's vigorous climate, and of the starvation, disease, and untold — often stoically accepted — privations which were inherent in colonizing frontier areas, especially in the North. It is a story which Finn Gad is singularly well qualified to tell. His knowledge of Greenlandic history is based upon painstaking archival research which places him in the category of doyen of Greenland historians. He has also had the advantage of spending many years in Greenland pursuing his main occupation of teaching, and as a result has acquired a knowledge of the language and place which has enabled him to write authoritatively about early developments on the island.

Gad records the immense economic and social changes which occurred in West Greenland until the 1782 reforms: the conflict between native Greenland Eskimos and the succession of European exploiters superimposed upon the persistent mission of the Norwegian pastor from Harstad, Hans Egede, and his wife, Giertrud Rasch. Hans Egede hoped to re-establish contact with the lost Norse colonies of Greenland and bring them the Christian faith. This mission was to have been financed by trade with the local inhabitants. The Norsemen had, of course, long since disappeared, so local Greenland Eskimos then became the objects of Egede's efforts.

Gad makes the justifiable claim of having produced "the first detailed and comprehensive narrative on the development of Greenland . . . even in Danish." The scope and careful scholarship evident in this volume show how well he has succeeded in his task. In my review of Volume I, I worried about historical minutiae which tended to obtrude upon an otherwise good tale. I have found Volume II equally scholarly, but with a more free-flowing narrative style which will hold the general reader's interest without detriment to historical accuracy and scholarship. The result is a happy combination of solid research and literary style — a combination which is destined to assure permanent recognition of Gad's tireless efforts to present a story unparalleled in human history: the effects of the impingement of western man and his values and attitudes upon an ancient civilization which represented the ultimate in human adaptation to nature. In the last paragraph of the book, much is lost by the absence of a rendering of one passage from the original Danish text: "The development in the first 60 years of colonization meant therefore that Danish society, in a limited way to be sure, began to feel its obligation for the Greenlanders." (my translation). This is the voice of conscience: the beginning of a unique benevolent and protective native policy in the North which was to become a model for other northern lands administered from southern seats of comfort.

In the process of translation, sacrifices have been made which are perhaps unavoidable. Little more than two pages of notes on the source material and just over 80 references at chapter endings are included, whereas the original Danish volume contains 1,328 notes and annotated references spread over 100 pages. An 11-page general index is an insufficient replacement of a 34-page index of persons, place names and subjects in the Danish edition. My comments in the review of Volume I, therefore, still apply: a scholar desiring original sources must refer to the Danish edition for the most part. Another shortcoming, repeated in the second volume of both the English and Danish editions, is the lack of a good map.

The illustrations are quite representative of the rather limited available material. The Danish edition's magnificent colour portraits of Hans Egede and his wife Giertrud Rasch, Jacob Sewerin, and the Greenlanders Pôq and Qiperoq are reproduced in black-and-white in the English edition, presumably to

realize a saving in printing costs. One wonders, however, whether a book costing $27.60 ought not to be free from such economies — especially when the translation costs have been underwritten by the Danish government's Rask-Ørsted Fund. The book's cost will undoubtedly limit its distribution to library shelves. At a somewhat lower price, the individual northern scholar could have had the pleasure of including this splendid volume among his reference works.

Finn Gad is to be lauded for his continuing efforts to produce the first large and comprehensive history of Greenland. Praise must also go to the translator, Gordon C. Bowden, and to the English publishers, C. Hurst & Company, for undertaking a project which will benefit all non-Danish-speaking persons with a northern interest.

William G. Mattox

ATHAPASKAN ADAPTATIONS: HUNTERS AND FISHERMEN OF THE SUBARCTIC FORESTS. By James W. VanStone. *Chicago: Aldine, 1974. 5½ x 8¼ inches, 145 pages, maps, tables, and illustrations. $7.50 cloth, $2.95 paper.*

As James VanStone points out in the appendix to his excellent little book *Athapaskan Adaptations,* the past fifteen years have witnessed a great upsurge of interest in the cultures of hunters, fishers and gatherers, and a consequent rediscovery of the Athapaskans of the American Subarctic. In part this seems to reflect anthropology's present emphasis on cultural ecology and cultural evolution, as well as the problems inherent in rapid social change. Quite possibly, also, as this reviewer suspects, it results from the great increase in numbers of graduate students which occurred in the nineteen fifties and sixties, and the increasing accessibility of the North as an area for field work. In any event a new generation of Athapaskanists has already published the results of a variety of specialized studies and more are still in manuscript form.

Although most students of the Northern Athapaskans have felt that a certain unity pervaded the cultures of the various groups, this has been more of a gut feeling than a demonstrable reality. The great environmental contrasts within the Athapaskan area and the adaptability of the various groups to their respective ecological niches make any general cultural synthesis difficult. As a result few scholars have attempted it, and then only at a fairly superficial level. Fortunately VanStone brings to this task wide acquaintance with the literature, both old and new, combined with field experience in both Alaska and Canada. His book is intended as an introduction to Athapaskan ethnography for the beginning student, both undergraduate and graduate, and consequently its emphasis is on general patterns rather than extensive ethnographic detail.

After a brief introduction the author analyses Athapaskan culture under eight chapter headings followed by an appendix, "The Ethnographic Literature and Future Research Needs," together with selected references and suggested future readings, the latter annotated. An index, maps, and a carefully selected group of illustrations — some old, some recent — complete the volume. In Chapter 1, "Natural Environment and Human Populations," he points out that since the Athapaskans lacked any tribal organization and resultant tribal consciousness, what emerges is "a cultural continuum carried on by a series of interlocking groups whose individual lifeways differed in only minor details from those of their immediate neighbors." Following McClellan, he then attempts to resolve the difficulties inherent in contrasting environments by dividing the territory into five physiographic units: Arctic Drainage Lowlands, Cordilleran, Yukon and Kuskokwim River Basins, Cook Inlet-Susitna River Basin, and Copper River Basin. The exploitation of the varying food resources of these areas is discussed in Chapter 2, "The Subsistence Base and Settlement Patterns." In this connection VanStone makes a point, sometimes overlooked by anthropologists, that throughout the boreal forest almost every food resource is subject to marked fluctuations in abundance, both regular and irregular. Using the typology devised by Beardsley *et al.,* the author classifies the community pattern of the "typical" Northern Athapaskans, those of the northern cordilleran and northern arctic drainage lowlands, as "Restricted Wandering" while the Cook Inlet-Susitna River and Yukon-Kuskokwim groups, including the Ingalik, Koyukon and Tanana, are considered to be "Central Based Wandering." In the opinion of this reviewer, VanStone errs in including the aboriginal Koyukon and Tanana in the latter category.

"Social Institutions," the subject of Chapter 3, permits a greater degree of generalization. VanStone believes that June Helm's concepts of "regional band," "local band," and "task group" (the two latter often indistinguishable) are applicable throughout the area, although the development of the fur trade tended to obliterate pre-contact group-