

THE LAND BEYOND. BY DAVID KEENLEYSIDE. *Toronto: Nelson, Foster and Scott, 1975. 5½ x 9 inches, 232 pages. \$8.95.*

Some of the social problems in the Arctic discussed in current newspapers and periodicals come to life in this novel. The story centres on a young artist, Randall Tait, who leaves his comfortable life in Montreal to paint the people and their environment in a small settlement on Bylot Island about six hundred miles north of the Arctic Circle. He is both uneasy and excited at the prospect of living for a year in a land about which he knows nothing, except from what he has read of the hardships.

Before he has the chance to become acquainted with the settlement, Tait is pressed into part-time teaching by Carl Hobden, the principal of the school, who is short of staff. Although Tait is loath to interrupt his painting, teaching does give him an opportunity to get to know the people through their children; but the friendships that develop, particularly with the young Eskimo woman, Taggak, are deeply resented by Hobden. Most of the Inuit and white people attempt to understand him, but he makes no effort to understand anyone; his bigotry, which causes constant friction throughout the settlement, is expressed in his parting words to Tait as he goes off in a dogteam with Taggak and her brother to visit their father's new camp: "I don't like it at all! Mixing with the native people the way you are doing can only create problems. It will erode the position you've acquired in the community . . ."

Dramatic incidents follow in quick succession, and Tait becomes involved in all aspects of life in the settlement including, unhappily, conflicts between the People of the Seal and the People of the Walrus. These are accentuated during the winter when outdoor activities are curtailed and alcohol flows. Tait's despair and indiscretions during that period, and his joy at the coming of spring and the sun, are poignantly described, as are the beauties of the landscape and wildlife seen through his eyes and those of Taggak.

In spite of the disastrous ending to his stay, brought about by a paranoid action on the part of Hobden, Tait, like many other visitors to the North, finds that he can be happy nowhere else, and the book ends with his expressed determination to return.

Except in a few instances, the author's style is simple and vigorous, his natural gift for story-telling makes the characters of the novel live.

Anna P. B. Monson

BELUGA HUNTERS: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE MACKENZIE DELTA KITTEGARYUMIUT. BY ROBERT MCGHEE. ILLUSTRATED BY D. W. LAVERIE. *Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974. 6 x 9 inches, 124 pages. No price.*

The Eskimo hunters of the Mackenzie River delta with their quarry, the Beluga whale, are here viewed over a thousand year period through the magic of historical recall and archaeological excavation. In this slim volume, Robert McGhee has packed the results of months of historical research and two seasons (1969 and 1970) of archaeological investigations in the Mackenzie River delta. The focus of the study is the abandoned village of Kittigazuit and the Kittegaryumiut Eskimo of the East Channel area of the Mackenzie River. The research was supported by the National Museum of Man, Ottawa, with field assistance provided in part by the Inuvik Research Laboratory and the Polar Continental Shelf Project.

The book is divided into three sections: Historical Background; Archaeological Evidence; and Analysis and Conclusions.

In the first section, McGhee attempts to establish an ethno-historical base to augment his archaeological data. This section is particularly valuable, providing a clear account of the contacts of the Eskimos of the Mackenzie River with Europeans (first established in 1799), and the effects of trade upon the life and settlement patterns of a people whose hunting of the Beluga whale was a dominant aspect of their economy. A capsule ethnography of the Kittegaryumiut prior to the influx of Alaskan Eskimos during the commercial whaling period is also included.

The second section takes up the major portion of the volume. Here site survey data from the 1969 and 1970 investigations is presented along with the description of the artefact inventories from the extensively tested sites of Kittigazuit and Radio Creek. Sites along the East Channel of the Mackenzie River appear to have been occupied during the late prehistoric and historic periods, with the bulk of the site inventory coincident with Thule to recent Eskimo phases in North Alaska. Comparison of the artefact inventories from the Mackenzie River delta with those from sites in central Canada, north and northwestern Alaska, revealed that the closest correlations are with the latter area—specifically with assemblages from the Noatak and Kobuk River drainages.