

**FUR TRADE POSTS OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES: 1870-1970.** By PETER J. USHER. *Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971. 8½ x 11 inches, 180 pages.*

To the serious student of Canada's Far North, and to those whose interest stems from that nostalgia that one who has lived there never seems to get over, this excellent work by Dr. Peter Usher is invaluable. To go back 100 years and sift through masses of unrelated material, piecing together and cross-checking the often tenuous and unravelled threads of fur trade history is an undertaking that would discourage all but the trained research scientist. It also required personal dedication and when one reads and studies the introduction and preambles to the different sections, the personal involvement of the author is quite apparent.

This last stronghold of the Fur Trade, the Northwest Territories, has been divided into six regions, taking into account such important factors as the grouping of people, the nature of the fur resources, transportation routes, traditional trapping grounds, and the organization of the trade. By again dividing the regions into sub-regions, the author has made it easy to study special areas. Trade Post locations have been coded and are easily found on the accompanying maps. The ownership of trading posts has also been broken down into five different categories from the major companies down to Mission Posts, the latter having from time to time been licensed to trade in furs for special reasons.

Although the Fur Trade is generally regarded as having reached its zenith in the pre-Confederation years, it lingered on in the Territories as the most important means of livelihood for the native peoples until the nineteen forties when the transition from a hunting to a wage-earning economy took place. The author, to use his own expression, has put flesh on the bare bones of fact by consulting "living fur-traders", now a dwindling band, to clear up points which had not been properly documented, and the result of the author's personal contacts with northerners is quite apparent.

One hundred years ago there were only nine fur trade posts in the Northwest Territories, all located in the Mackenzie River Valley where the Hudson's Bay Company held a monopoly. Twenty years after the cession of Rupert's Land to Canada in 1870, the building of a railway and the introduction of steamboats on the northern rivers gave easy access to the Mackenzie River Basin.

During the past 100 years, a total of 535 trading posts were in operation in the Territories at 229 locations. The Eastern Arctic got a late start in 1909 with the establishment of Wolstenholme Post in Northwestern Quebec, then considered to be a part of the Northwest Territories. Today, for reasons which are analysed by the author, the number of posts within the Territories has declined to a mere 69, of which 40 are run by the Hudson's Bay Company, and the remainder by Independents and Co-operatives.

The work under review gives statistical breakdowns by ownership, opening and closing dates, the number of fur trading establishments which have operated within each settlement and information on "camp trades" and "tripping" for furs. One interesting observation is that the Mackenzie River Delta, because of population density and convenience to the major trading posts, rendered unnecessary the tripping and camp trading so common at one time in other areas. The relative trade stability of the Mackenzie River Delta stems from the muskrat population which did not suffer the cyclic ups-and-downs to the same extent as did other fur-bearers, notably the white fox.

It is difficult to do justice to a statistical work in a brief review but the introductory material and preambles to sub-region sections is well-written, informative, authentic and an excellent reference source. The author invites comments from interested people to clear up any points in doubt, or in need of correction. These seem to be very few indeed.

Slowly but surely the history of our north country is being pieced together and Peter Usher's *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories* is an outstanding contribution, well received by northerners.

A. Copland

**RESEARCH IN THE ANTARCTIC.** EDITED BY LOUIS O. QUAM. *American Association for the Advancement of Science, Publication No. 93. Baltimore: The Horn-Shafer Division of Geo. W. King Printing Co., 1971. 6¼ x 9¼ inches, 768 pages, illustrated. \$19.95 to AAAS members; \$24.95 to non-members.*

Symposia have multiple reasons for existing providing they are arranged in accordance with a need, are the product of a coordinated program, are supported by a presentation of meaningful papers, and the authors of papers given are respected authorities in their fields. This is particularly important if the end

results are to be published as a significant contribution to literature in the subject field. *Research in the Antarctic* fits these requirements very well indeed.

The amount of productive scientific research in and field survey of Antarctica that has been accomplished since the inception of the United States program in collaboration with other nations almost defies imagination because, though a great deal has been published, there must be a large amount which, as raw or refined data and observations, is so considerable that the cost of publication is prohibitive. It is fortunate that *Antarctic, Journal of the United States* has served as a substantial outlet for the summary results of many of the programs the Office of Polar Programs of the National Science Foundation has sponsored and the United States Naval Support Force, Antarctica, has supported in the field. We are fortunate therefore and it was timely that the principal scientific results of a decade of United States effort in Antarctica should be summarized by well-qualified participants in the Antarctic Research Program held at the 135th Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Dallas, Texas, December 1968. *Research in the Antarctic* "... is an outgrowth from, but not a complete record of, ..." that symposium.

But the presentation of papers at a meeting of specialists is necessarily restrictive. Fortunately, the American Association for the Advancement of Science agreed to sponsor the publication with some modifications of the papers, and engaged the capable editorship of Dr. Louis O. Quam and Horace D. Porter and the assistance of other specialists in assembling and editing the materials for publication. The result of much patience, editorial skills, and good judgement has been the publication of a large single-volume report extending through 768 pages of text, copious footnotes and notes, and numerous illustrations. The text is divided into 7 parts, 6 of which are introduced by professionally well-qualified specialists in the subject with which each part deals. The whole comprises 33 chapters prepared by 43 contributors, and 6 introductions prepared by 6 editors.

It is impossible to do more than suggest in a review the highlights of each part. Part I (pp. 3-65) not introduced by an editor includes a summary of the role of James Eight (1798-1882) as an American in antarctic investigation (1829-1831) by Joel W. Hedg-peth; the history of the significant role of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research

(SCAR) by the eminent polar scientist Laurence M. Gould; and The Antarctic Treaty described and discussed by Thomas O. Jones who for over a decade has guided much of the scientific program in the National Science Foundation.

Chapters II through VII cover the following principal themes: II *Biology*, George A. Llano, ed. (8 papers, pp. 69-287); III. *Glaciology*, A. P. Crary, ed.; (4 papers, pp. 291-421); Part IV. *Cold Poles and Heat Balances*, Morton J. Rubin, ed. (3 papers, pp. 425-487); V. *Conjugate Phenomena*, Ray R. Heer, Jr., ed. (6 papers, pp. 491-603); VI. *Ocean Dynamics*, Mort D. Turner, ed. (4 papers, pp. 609-660); and VII. *Gondwanaland*, Louis O. Quam, ed. (5 papers, pp. 663-745). This reviewer quibbles a bit about the statistics of authors, chapters, editors, and contributors noted on the dust jacket as 39 chapters by 46 contributors because of the 6 parts with introductions 3 are 2 pages and 3 pages in length. These hardly qualify as chapters. Strictly speaking these are brief introductions as the authors are listed as editors. A tabulation of the number of authors, some chapters have more than one, reveals 43. Unfortunately the dust jacket notes that "... the book is divided into seven parts and that the editors who introduce each part are government research administrators ..." But the first part has no editor. I hasten to add, however, that in the preface to the volume the editors state the situation correctly. In a few instances, such as St. John's Range (p. 159 Saint John's Range) are at variance with the approved or decided toponymics of the United States Board on Geographic Names as recorded in *Official Name Decisions Gazetteer* No. 14-3, June 1969.

This remarkable volume, so profusely illustrated with maps and illustrations and so fully documented is a tribute to the patience and professionalism of the editors and the contributors alike. This is so also because digesting and compacting such a wealth of wide-ranging divergent scientific information in so many different publications is a painstakingly difficult job at best. The stated objective of the editors in hoping that publication of this volume will leave the reader with a better understanding of the research being done in Antarctica has been achieved I believe with notable success. But more than that this volume is a record of large contributions of United States scientists to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the great white continent down under.

Herman R. Friis