

comprehensive overview of Penny's life and participation in the search for Franklin. But while this is an undeniably authoritative work, it should not be the last word on the wider 1850–51 expedition. Many more stories are waiting to be told, and future hunters on the track will be able to uncover bright new insights if they follow the detailed map drawn so carefully for us by W. Gillies Ross.

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HAROLD INNIS ON PETER POND: BIOGRAPHY, CULTURAL MEMORY, AND THE CONTINENTAL FUR TRADE. By WILLIAM J. BUXTON. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2020. ISBN 978-0-7735-5861-8. 376 p., bib., index, notes. Softbound. Cnd\$39.95. Also available as an ebook.

Most scholars of Canadian history are familiar with Harold Innis's (1956:393) maxim, articulated at the end of *The Fur Trade in Canada* that, "the present Dominion emerged not in spite of geography but because of it." While the statement has been derided as a crude form of geographic determinism linking river basins to national development, William J. Buxton's new volume, *Harold Innis on Peter Pond*, implores readers to pay closer attention to the next sentence in Innis's (1956:393) book: "the significance of the fur trade consisted in its determination of the geographic framework". For Buxton, Innis's primary interest was in the way the fur trade economy, as much as the constitutional developments that led to Confederation, shaped the outline of the Canadian nation. For those who believe Innis's large-scale economic studies neglected the relationship between individual agency and historical change, Buxton's volume reveals how, for nearly two decades after the release of *The Fur Trade in Canada*, Innis's fur trade scholarship focused primarily on a single person: the explorer Peter Pond.

Buxton's book consists of a lengthy and well-crafted introduction that explains Innis's obsession with Pond, followed by a large collection of Innis's writings and correspondence on the explorer, including the full text of his biographical work, *Peter Pond: Fur Trader and Adventurer*; a layered work that includes his reflections on the fur trade alongside the text of Pond's memoirs. Buxton's critical

commentary and Innis's writing confirm that the latter's obsession with Pond stemmed from a desire to reclaim Pond's reputation not only as the preeminent explorer of northwestern Canada, but also as a Father of Confederation.

How does a man who plied his way through rivers and forests in search of fur in the 1770s become a "father" of a nation that emerged a mostly independent political entity nearly a century later? For Innis, Pond's role in pushing the fur trade toward the Athabasca region in the early 1780s and his path-breaking mapping of the country between Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean, especially the all-important Mackenzie River Drainage basin, was the catalyst for the expansion of commercial activity in the region. Innis was adamant that historians had overstated the importance Alexander Mackenzie's famous voyage down the Mackenzie River in 1879, because none of Mackenzie's achievements would have been possible without Pond's initial surveys of the region. Although many will be familiar with Innis's well known declaration that the eventual geographical contours of the fur trade roughly matched the political boundaries of Canada, the book reveals Innis's corresponding belief that the fur trade was only able to expand when it did because of the pioneering work of Peter Pond. According to Buxton, Innis's interest in Pond was piqued by academic celebrations of Canada's diamond jubilee in 1927. Forced to endure various celebrations of the political origins of Canada (responsible government, Confederation) in the 1850s and 1860s, and even worse, celebrations of Pond's disciple Mackenzie as the principle agent of northwestern expansion, Innis abruptly decided to devote at least some of his writing time to promoting Pond's legacy.

Although this book will largely appeal to specialists in the northern fur trade and Innis scholars, Buxton has done a great service to illuminate the later stages of Innis fur trade research and re-focus the reader's attention on Peter Pond, as Innis would have wanted. Pond's archaic English in the biography may be difficult reading for many, but the clarity of Innis's own writing helps bring the explorer's ideas and experiences to life. Innis's attempts to brand Pond as a Father of Confederation may seem to stretch the bounds of accuracy from a contemporary vantage point, but the book nevertheless provides a crucial window into some of the earliest moments of European and Indigenous contact in northern Canada, including Pond's keen observations on land and people and important details such as the equipment and provisions that facilitated the journeys. Equally important are the documents detailing Innis's obsession with Pond, which includes remarkable correspondence on commemorating Pond's legacy with one of his descendants, evidence that Innis's fur trade research was not an account of impersonal economic forces, a "dehumanized" account of the past, as historian Carl Berger (1976:98) has suggested.

Admirable as this volume may be, there were areas where I thought Buxton may have more thoroughly explored the wider implications of Innis's intellectual affinity for Pond. Buxton's introduction might have

adopted a wider analytical lens to consider the cultural and intellectual milieu in which Innis circulated during the inter-war years. During this period, other Canadian artists and intellectuals (e.g., Arthur Lower and the Group of Seven) attempted to attach provisional notions of Canada's national identity to aspects of northernness, while at the same time federal and provincial governments began to articulate the first large-scale, if largely unrealistic, plans for northern development. Asking how these broader ideas of Canada's northern identity influenced Innis's theories about Pond might have helped the volume move beyond the constraints of its Pond-centric approach. I was also surprised not to see a discussion of Innis's broader ideas of the North, a theme taken up brilliantly by many scholars in Buxton's 2013 edited collection, *Harold Innis and the North*. Throughout his career, Innis was sometimes a naive booster of northern development; at other times he stressed the vulnerability of local people and environments to development based on a narrow range of raw natural resource incursions. How might Innis's admiration for Pond have contributed to his somewhat blinkered view of the North as a frontier for national development, and how much did his overt celebration of Pond's expansionism blind him to the imposition of colonialism on the Indigenous people of northern Canada?

In the absence of such broader discussions, this remains a volume pitched at specialists. By meticulously collecting and curating Innis's writings on Pond, Buxton has provided a valuable one-stop venue for graduate students and academic historians interested in the 18th century fur trade as seen through the eyes of one of its most prominent historical actors, and also one of its most important historical scholars.

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NORTH BY NUUK: GREENLAND AFTER ROCKWELL KENT. By DENIS DEFIBAUGH. Rochester, New York: RIT Press, 2019. ISBN 978-1-939125-72-9. 165 p., map, b&w and colour illus. Hardbound. US\$49.95.

WHEN THE COLOUR CEASES TO BE JUST A COLOUR: ROCKWELL KENT'S GREENLAND PAINTINGS. By ERIK TORM. Uummannaq, Greenland: Uummannaq Polar Institute, 2019. ISBN 9788799676590. 112 p., maps, b&w and colour illus. Available in two editions: English/Russian and Danish/Greenlandic. Hardbound. Cdn\$105.00.

Two new books share a conviction that artworks American painter Rockwell Kent created in Greenland provide insights that will help contemporary Greenlanders better understand their world. As principal investigator for a project funded in 2016 by the National Science Foundation, Denis Defibaugh showed Kent's little-known photographs and lantern slides to Greenlanders residing in four of the communities Kent visited in 1929, 1931–32, and 1934–35: Illorsuit, Uummannaq, Sisimiut and Nuuk. These historical images, reproduced beautifully in Defibaugh's book along with dozens of his own photographs of Greenland, were used as visual catalysts for discussions about social, economic, and cultural challenges Greenlanders confronted nearly a century ago and those they face today. Erik Torm's book showcases Kent's Greenland paintings and watercolours and was motivated, in large part, by the preservation of local Greenlandic culture and the promotion of educational programs for Inuit youth. The publisher of his book, Uummannaq Polar Institute (founded in 2007), is a branch of the Uummannaq Children's Home. Reproductions of images in Torm's book were enlarged to poster size and put on display in an exhibition at the Sisimiut Museum that opened in January 2020.

Both books find inspiration in two exhibitions that rekindled interest in Kent's Greenland paintings, including those the artist gave to the Soviet peoples as a gesture of friendship in 1960. Those exhibitions—*Distant Shores: The Odyssey of Rockwell Kent* (organized by the Norman Rockwell Museum in 2000) and *Rockwell Kent: The Mythic and the Modern* (organized by the Portland Museum of Art, Maine in 2005)—informed viewers of Kent's initial shipwreck on the coast of Greenland, recounted in his best-selling adventure memoir, *N by E* [North by East] (1930), the title of which is echoed by *North by Nuuk*.

A professor of photography at Rochester Institute of Technology, Defibaugh was primarily interested in the visual contrast between the Greenland Kent captured with his Leica camera in the 1930s and the genealogical, environmental, social, and cultural life of twenty-first century Greenland. Climate change in Greenland, evidenced by retreating glaciers and a rapidly melting ice sheet, lent urgency to Defibaugh's project that culminated with immaculate timing. Three months after his third and final visit to Illorsuit in March 2017, a massive landslide generated a tsunami that swept through Karrat and