

CONQUEST OF THE NORTH POLE

POLE NORD: HISTOIRE DE SA CONQUETE ET PROBLEMES CONTEMPORAINS DE NAVIGATION MARITIME ET AERIENNE. Malourie, J. and Devers, S. (editors). 1987. Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. 385 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 2-222-03884-7. FF400.

In November 1983 Professor Jean Malouire, Director of the Centre d' Etudes Arctiques in Paris, organised his tenth international colloquium on a polar theme. The subject was the North Pole, and this volume contains the proceedings of the meeting. The North Pole, as a term in English, is apt to be used somewhat ambiguously: it may connote the geographical point where the Earth's axis of spin meets the surface, or it may refer to the whole of the Arctic and perhaps even the sub-Arctic, or anything in between. The papers given here cover the broader spectrum. The first in the book deals, appropriately, with the problems of defining and locating the point. Two other papers deal with physical aspects of the wider area—the Earth's magnetic field centred on the magnetic pole, and palaeoglaciation and palaeoenvironments. There follow four further scientific papers on aspects of the Arctic Ocean: submarine geology and cartography, and sea ice. All these provide helpful background.

The core of the volume, however, is the set of 28 papers on various themes concerning man's activities in the Arctic. Many facets of Arctic history are illuminated, from classical times to today. Among the most interesting are statements on the Cook-Peary controversy by another footslogger over the sea ice, Wally Herbert, and by Utaaq, son of the Eskimo who accompanied Peary in 1909. One may note, too, the extraordinary story of the Monzino dog sledge expedition to the Pole in 1971. Certain little-known byways are explored, like medals awarded for Arctic exploration, museums and collections of Arctic artefacts, Arctic films, and even stamps franked at the Pole. In a section on transportation, discussions of submarine operations under ice are particularly apposite, as is a summary of maritime law problems in the Arctic Ocean. This well-produced volume contains much that is new, relevant, and interesting, even if it has taken a little while to see the light of day. (Terence Armstrong, Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge University, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

IN SEARCH OF FRANKLIN

OVERLAND TO STARVATION COVE: WITH THE INUIT IN SEARCH OF FRANKLIN, 1878–1880. Klutschak, Heinrich; translated and edited by William Barr. 1988. Toronto, University of Toronto Press. 261 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-8020-5762-4. £17.50, Can\$27.50.

Heinrich Klutschak was artist and surveyor with the Schwatka expedition of 1878–80 which searched for written records allegedly left by Franklin's men on or near King William Island three decades before. Four Americans, the interpreter "Eskimo Joe", and twelve Inuit left

the northwest coast of Hudson Bay in April 1879. Their epic sled journey of more than 5300 kilometres, performed in less than a year, included several unusually cold winter months during which they recorded an extreme low temperature of -54°C (-71°F), and has probably never been matched. It was a triumph of the Inuit method—a relatively small party, keeping warm inside fur clothing and snow houses, depending upon dogs for transport, hunting for food along the route, and avoiding scurvy by a meat diet: in every way it was the antithesis of the Franklin expedition whose tragic end they sought to explain. Two books about the expedition appeared in 1881, Gilder's Schwatka's *search* and Klutschak's *Als Eskimo unter den Eskimos*. Almost eighty years later Schwatka's journal was published posthumously under the title *The long arctic search*.

Indulging in his favourite pastime of translating Russian, German and French works for a wide and appreciative audience of monolingual arctic enthusiasts, Prof William Barr has now provided the first English version of Klutschak's narrative. Although the task of translation would seem challenge enough, Barr has gone much farther, and the result is an 'enhanced Klutschak', adorned with a substantial introduction, a detailed postscript, a brief 'afterword', and more than a hundred explanatory notes. The English text flows smoothly, and Klutschak's account, which is always interesting, often exciting, and sometimes amusing, is a delight to read. The fifty-odd sketches in the 1881 edition are reproduced, accompanied by a few recent photographs. Three location maps replace the original ones, but unhappily they do not show the expedition's track, as the earlier maps did. Sketches, photos and maps are printed in lacklustre grey tones, but otherwise the book is attractive and well-designed, with large, readable type, and a handsome dust cover. (W. Gillies Ross, Scott Polar Research Institute, Cambridge University, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

ARCTIC ENVIRONMENTAL ATLAS

ENVIRONMENTAL ATLAS FOR BEAUFORT SEA OIL SPILL RESPONSE. Dickins, D. F. and 8 others. 1987. Vancouver, D. F. Dickins Associates. 182 p and appendices, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-921623-03-8. The objective of this atlas is to collect together environmental information required for the planning and implementation of oil-spill countermeasures in the coastal and offshore areas of the Beaufort Sea. It covers the coastline from the Alaskan border to the Baillie Islands. The data are summarised in a series of regional maps (1:250,000 scale) and operational maps (1:150,000).

The authors classify the environmental sensitivity of different parts of the coast by a development of a ranking scheme due to Worbel. Thus, at Whale Bay south of Herschel Island, diving ducks are assigned a mark of 9 (because of their high sensitivity to oil), and that mark is multiplied by a weighting factor of 1.75. The product 15.75 becomes part of an overall sensitivity index of

68.95, which also includes contributions ascribed to the Bay's importance to local residents, to nearby fish habitats, to foxes, archaeological sites and a tundra cliff. On map 3, the user can see that this sensitivity rating is 'high', by comparison with the northern shore of Herschel Island ('moderate') and can locate a range of useful information about different animals and birds, and the seasons when they are active. Turning to a second map, he can find a simple coastal classification, identify possible sites for debris disposal, locate a STOL airstrip 15 km away, and find a brief discussion of oil spill countermeasures.

The computerised maps are reproduced well, and the methodology is described with great care. In addition to its specific target of response to oil spills, this compendium will be a useful reference in other fields such as offshore construction. It does not discuss the deeper aspects of the philosophy of assigning numerical values to environmental sensitivity, and the details would be easy to criticise, but it represents a brave and worthwhile attempt to quantify the problem. A less convincing aspect is the discussion of oil spill countermeasures, which is slightly superficial and does not tackle the practical constraints on operations in different seasons. (Andrew Palmer, Andrew Palmer and Associates Limited, 25 Victoria Street, 6th Floor, London SW1H 0EX.)

ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE CENTRAL CANADIAN ARCTIC

COLLECTORS AND FORAGERS: SUBSISTENCE-SETTLEMENT SYSTEM CHANGE IN THE CENTRAL CANADIAN ARCTIC, A.D. 1000-1960. Savelle, J. M. 1987. Oxford, BAR. 337 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-86054-465-6. £18.

This study is based on a PhD dissertation, revised while the author held a post-doctoral research fellowship at Cambridge. It combines accurate and strenuous original fieldwork with a careful survey of the literature, and has benefitted from discussion with Dr Allen McCarthey, author of important work on the use of bowhead whales by the Thule Eskimo in Arctic Canada. Dr Savelle's prime objective is to explain how subsistence and settlement mobility in this region has responded to ecological change from the time of the Thule Eskimo to the onset of the Little Ice Age (which in an adjacent region spelled the end of the Norse settlement in Greenland).

For well over a generation it has been common ground among prehistorians that valid inferences can be drawn only by interpreting archaeological data in the context of their topographical and biological, as well as of their cultural setting. In other words it has long been accepted that archaeological, like anthropological, problems need to be approached from an ecological point of view. However, a marked difference in approach exists, largely as a result of Prof Lewis Binford's teaching, between the attitude adopted in many centres in North America and that commonly prevailing in Europe. British and Danish prehistorians in particular take their stand on the geographical, biological and archaeological data actually or

potentially available from the investigation of sites, and seek to effect reconstructions of the way ecosystems functioned in terms of tangible evidence rather than theory.

European prehistorians trained to effect reconstructions on such a basis will nevertheless find interest in much of the material of Dr Savelle's book. In particular it provides a series of site maps, as well as an exciting set of plans, many of them stemming from the author's own fieldwork, which show the positions not merely of dwellings, but also of whale skulls and mandibles and such features as caches, kayak rests and contours. An interesting set of half-tone illustrations, unhappily too poorly reproduced to make useful lantern slides, is also provided. These include one of a ring of whale skulls, reminiscent of those of mammoth skulls recovered by Russian prehistorians from palaeolithic times. (Prof Grahame Clark, 36 Millington Road, Cambridge CB3 9HP UK.)

THE FUTURE OF ANTARCTICA

ANTARCTICA: THE NEXT DECADE: REPORT OF A STUDY GROUP CHAIRED BY SIR ANTHONY PARSONS. Parsons, A. (editor) 1987. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Studies in Polar Research. 164 p, map, hard cover. ISBN 0-521-33181-1. £25, US\$44.50. This presents a report of a study group chaired by the distinguished diplomat Sir Anthony Parsons. The study began in 1985 at the instigation of the David Davies Memorial Institute of International Studies and extended over several meetings during a period of eighteen months. Three specific subjects motivated it; the approach of the year 1991 when it might be requested that the Antarctic Treaty be reviewed, the present United Nations interest in Antarctica, and the active concern of non-governmental environmentalist groups about the region. The book gives a good international consideration of its subject for, although the contributors are nearly all British, many have been directly involved in Antarctic Treaty negotiations.

The main part of the text is divided into three sections: the Antarctic Treaty System under stress, uses of Antarctica, and the future. The first sets out clearly and unequivocally several divergent political viewpoints, giving the origin, case for change, and relationships with other bodies of the Antarctic Treaty system. It points out that, at the date of writing, there were 35 countries (presently 37) signatory to the Treaty which represented 80% of the population of the Earth. The second considers the functional questions of science, conservation, living and mineral resources, and military aspects of Antarctica. The third makes an attempt to reconcile differing viewpoints and to formulate recommendations which 'could be of value to governments and other interested bodies which may have to face some hard decisions in the years ahead.' Appendices include the text of the Treaty and relevant conventions with details of national adherence, and the United Nations resolutions on Antarctica.

The work is timely and well presented, with an efficient bibliography and concise index. For an up to date