

command on George Back's 1835 Barrens trip, King had stashed two bags of pemmican and some metal goods among rocks in a small sandy bay midway down the north side of Montreal Island in Chantry Inlet. Five years later, coming from the west, Thomas Simpson revisited this decaying cache. His book would have been consulted on board *Erebus* and *Terror*. King theorized that the last Franklin survivors might have deposited records at such a known location. A century later, Admiral Wright made the same argument for the cairn on Cape Britannia. Neither Anderson nor Stewart seems to have read the Thomas Simpson book. Thus they did not specifically search for the cache, much to the annoyance of Dr King. Anyway, David Woodman, the latest scholar to sift through all the oral and material evidence, admits that it is pure speculation whether any survivors got past Starvation Cove. One of the enduring charms of the Franklin mystery is these tag-ends that provide excuses, however implausible, for further interesting searches.

Barr repeatedly expresses his deep admiration for the sheer physical feat involved in the expedition. In a less formal publication, this could have been buttressed by the opinions of historically minded, recreational canoeists like John Lentz, the first to go down the Back River in modern times. It was the last real showcase for the skills of the fur-trade era. A generation earlier, York boats had replaced most canoes in the northwest. Even Simpson began to use American railroads on his way to Red River from Montreal. Yet he was still able to send three experts from the crew of his own express canoe. These were the legendary Caughnawaga Iroquois. As bowsmen they successfully navigated the 83 rapids of the Back, where a single mistake could damage a birchbark canoe beyond repair. Getting to the headwaters meant crossing 38 portages, several being multiple-miles each uphill through rough country. The standard carry was two pieces, totalling 180 lb, each time. Then there was a share of the heavy canoes, the dead weight grinding into one's shoulder. The class system prevented the officers themselves humping such loads or actually wielding a paddle. Outward bound, three-foot-thick, fresh-water ice impeded the voyageurs in late July; returning in their weakened craft, they risked foundering in frigid, wind-swept lakes. Knowing when to travel on big water requires real judgment, no matter how pressed for time. Modern adventurers, having done the Seven Summits and both Poles, might consider a single season, return canoe trip, from Great Slave Lake to Chantry Inlet, to be a worthy new challenge.

Given his unique knowledge of both Canadian and Russian Arctic exploration, Barr might have ventured more comparative estimates of Anderson's and Stewart's achievements. He does stress that bad luck denied them great fame. Severe sea ice that year prevented them from rounding Point Ogle in their frail canoes. Anderson certainly intended to send his associate westward. Even as it was, a younger, unmarried Stewart might have inspired one more portage with the inflatable Halkett rubber raft

that would have brought them to the last camp of the Franklin expedition in Starvation Cove. Originally, Anderson had also planned to search all the shores of King William Island. Realistically, Victory Point and the priceless paper note were probably beyond the range of canoes in the best of sea-ice years. Lady Jane Franklin carefully followed Anderson's advice in setting up the successful, ship-and-sledge, private expedition under Francis Leopold McClintock.

Whether they deserve the status of explorers is debatable. For much of the route they were following Back's map, although cursing its imprecision at times. For the first quarter of the trip, Anderson used a new Mountain Portage bypass to avoid thick ice on Artillery Lake. Even on this section he employed local Indians as guides. There is surely nothing novel or unworthy in such methods. Almost all exploration in Canadian history was done that way; there are precious few real explorers in the strict sense of the word.

Those in a hurry can easily pick out the well-identified 58 pages of readable and reliable commentary. Devotees of the Franklin search will revel in the documentary detail. Likewise, students of the fur trade have much to learn about the inner workings of the Hudson's Bay Company in its prime. Canoeists have a benchmark of hyper-performance. As would be expected by those who have read any of his many books, William Barr has produced an impressive volume, well up to the high standards of the Hakluyt Society series. Thus, although he did not seek the role, James Anderson has been duly inducted into the explorers' hall of fame. (C. Stuart Mackinnon, Apt 904, 11111 87 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 0X9, Canada.)

References

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A WHALING ENTERPRISE: SALVESEN IN THE ANTARCTIC. Gerald Elliot. 1998. Norwich: Michael Russell. 190 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-85955-241-1. £17.95.

The Scottish–Norwegian family firm, Christian Salvesen of Leith, was engaged in whaling for some 70 years — from the 1890s in the Faeroes and Shetlands until the early 1960s in the Antarctic. Its history, comprising all aspects of its activities from 1872 to 1945, but with particular reference to whaling, was written from the company archives in 1975 (Vamplew 1975). The present work, in contrast, covers only its Antarctic whaling enterprise, which may be said to have begun on New Island, West Falkland in 1909 (for a short period) and in the same year with the establishment of Leith Harbour, South Georgia.

The author, who joined the firm in 1948, is a great-grandson of Christian Salvesen and a nephew of the late Captain Harold (H.K.) Salvesen, the dominant figure in this book. Sir Gerald Elliot writes from first-hand experience of whaling in the Antarctic, through his association with Harold Salvesen, chairman of the South Georgia Company from 1942 to 1964. The author became one of the firm's directors in the 1950s and retired as chairman of Salvesen's in 1988. He writes largely from a personal standpoint, referring to 'our company' throughout.

The book is nearly 200 pages long, with an outline map of the Antarctic regions and a number of black-and-white plates, depicting whale catchers and factory ships. The approach is chronological, beginning with two chapters covering the years 1907 to 1948, before the author joined Salvesen's. In these he sets the scene, not only briefly describing the origins of the firm, but the history of whaling in the Antarctic, which began early in the twentieth century. He also outlines British and Norwegian government involvement, their whaling laws, the entry of Japan and Germany into Antarctic whaling, the change from shore-based to pelagic whaling, and the establishment of the International Whaling Convention and Commission in 1946, after British regulations to conserve the great whales had been negated since it became possible, with the advent of the stern slip-way for ships to operate on the high seas. In these early chapters, the reader first meets Harold Salvesen, who had served as an officer in the Indian Army and had taken a first-class degree at Oxford. Salvesen spent his first Antarctic summer in 1928/29, coming home 'captivated by whaling and enthusiastic about its prospects,' subsequently directing the business, and combining a 'formidable intellect with a vast appetite for work' (page 27).

The chapters that follow, covering the years 1948–63, form the backbone of the book. Because they cover the period in which the author was active, they have an immediacy, for example, in describing the Norwegian gunners, life at Leith Harbour, whaling methods, and the ships and catchers employed. The role of the International Whaling Commission and its inspectors in endeavouring to bring catch levels down to one consistent with the survival of the whales is brought out, while the role of the Dutch and Russians in pursuing their own goals, regardless of the evident decline of whale stocks, is condemned. Harold Salvesen's forthright opinions and actions thread the whole narrative. A few lines of quotation show him at work. The author accompanied him to the Antarctic, as secretary and bag carrier early in his career:

Bag carrier was no empty title. Harold took with him on his Antarctic visits a large battered leather trunk stuffed with files, a full travelling office. It accompanied us from ship to ship as we passed through the Antarctic and its papers were in constant use. They provided all the administrative back-up for the operation of the three expeditions, *Southern Venturer*, *Southern Harvester*, and Leith Harbour. Included there were crew lists, ship specifications, operating instructions,

notes on new plant, stores, schedules, new projects, supplemented by reams of his own notes, scribbled in pencil on pages torn from loose-leaf pads. Of particular importance were the draft programmes for movement of the tankers from fuel loading ports to and between the Antarctic expeditions. (page 53)

The author calls his book 'a chronicle of the grandeur, decline, and eventual extinction of the Antarctic whaling industry...linked with the fortunes of Christian Salvesen, for half a century one of the leading venturers in Antarctic whaling and closely concerned in the international struggles, eventually fruitless, to preserve the Antarctic whale stocks and save the industry' (page 9). Through his readable, clear, and interesting narrative, he succeeds admirably, and the book is a welcome addition to the history of modern whaling, earlier described so well by Johnsen and Tønnessen (1982). Sir Gerald, however, expresses no pity for the whale, nor concern for the cruelty its capture involved. Salvesen's efforts to conserve the stocks appear to have resulted from a desire to prolong the industry, which was also one of the aims of the Discovery Investigations, but in their case coupled with the lives of the leviathans themselves. (Ann Savours, Little Bridge Place, Bridge, Kent CT4 5LG.)

References

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EXPEDITION MEDICINE. David Warrell and Sarah Anderson (Editors). 1998. London: Profile Books and The Royal Geographical Society. vii + 292 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 1-86197-040-4. £17.99.

This book from the Royal Geographical Society is a great improvement over the RGS's *Expedition health and safety: prevention and treatment of medical problems in challenging environments*, even though one of the editors and many of the contributions have remained the same. Not the least of the improvements is the inclusion of relevant photographs and diagrams.

However, one may well question whether, given the plethora of wilderness medicine and outdoor first aid manuals that have come onto the market in the last decade or so, and the fact that many national organisations involved in expeditions have their own manuals, there is need for yet another such book. The answer probably rests with the fact that the vast majority of these new books are coming from North America, whereas *Expedition medicine* has very much a British focus and provides useful contact details for training, rescue, and information sources within the United Kingdom. As the RGS has always been interested in expedition medical practice and is an organisation that has supported countless expeditions all over the world for more than 100 years, it is important that it has such an *aide-mémoire* for those who seek its advice. However, this very feature does somewhat limit its useful-